

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



12 March 2018

Mrs Deirdre Monaghan
Headteacher
St George's Primary School
Sudbury Hill
Harrow
Middlesex
HA1 3SB

Dear Mrs Monaghan

Short inspection of St George's Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 February 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection.

Since your appointment as headteacher in January 2014, you have worked well with the governing body to implement changes. You have a clear focus on continual school improvement and provide motivational leadership. You have high expectations for everyone in the school and a vision of the best standards of education for all the pupils.

Since the previous inspection, you have developed a strong team of senior and middle leaders. Your skilful deployment of leaders means that they support teachers well in the classrooms in order to raise standards. They work as a cohesive team. For example, all subject leaders are working towards a common goal to improve the quality of writing in the school. The new strategies that you have introduced are leading to pupils making better progress in writing. However, you and your leaders know that there is more to do to raise standards in writing for the most able pupils in key stage 2.

Governors have a good understanding of the school and its strengths and weaknesses. They use their skills and expertise well to allocate responsibilities for monitoring key aspects of the school's work. They provide you with a balance of challenge and support. The school is working closely with the local authority to improve outcomes still further for identified pupils.

Parents commend the work you and your staff do. They are very positive about the provision in the school. They value your high visibility and presence around the school. Parents and pupils describe you as being approachable at all times, especially if they have any concerns. One parent spoke about the 'strong sense of community spirit within the school'.

Pupils are polite, and behave well around the school and in lessons. They have positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils value and respect each other and take pride in their achievements. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly developed.

This is a school that knows its community well and puts children and their families at the heart of all it does.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Safeguarding records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders have made sure that all required checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are completed and recorded.

The single central record is monitored regularly by the governing body. Staff training is thorough and is kept up to date. The safeguarding team has set up a review group to monitor any concerns that the school may have for vulnerable pupils. Records show that swift action is taken to protect children should the need arise. Leaders know families and individual pupils very well.

The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, feel that their children are safe and well looked after in school. Pupils spoken to all report that they feel safe in school. They can all identify an adult in school whom they can talk to if they have a concern. Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe online. For example, Year 6 pupils explained clearly what steps they would take when blogging and doing research online. Parents are kept well informed to help them keep their children safe when online.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at particular key lines of enquiry. You and your team had already identified in your self-evaluation the school's strengths and areas for development. Our first key line of enquiry looked at the progress of pupils in writing across the school. You, together with your leadership group, have focused on improving pupils' writing skills throughout the school. Together, you have introduced a range of effective initiatives to raise standards in writing.
- In the Reception Year, all children are now taught handwriting from an early age using a cursive script. Work in journals, and on display, shows that the most able children are able to write simple sentences using finger spaces. Handwriting is of a high standard in both the Reception Year and in key

stage 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are confident in using their phonics knowledge to record their ideas. All classes now have two writing books, one for writing skills and another for extended writing. Pupils are given more regular opportunities to write at length across all year groups. You and your staff apply these initiatives consistently across the school, as seen in visits to classrooms and in a scrutiny of books. All classes have writing walls, and some high-quality art displays are linked to the writing.

- You are ambitious to ensure that work in pupils' books is neatly presented and fluent. The introduction last year of a new scheme for reading has clearly had an impact on pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils are encouraged to self-assess and improve their own writing outcomes. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are encouraged to write in a wide range of genres and styles. Pupils are keen authors and said how much they now enjoyed writing in school. We saw examples of persuasive writing, poetry and biographies being recorded in their creative writing books. Pupils also showed their skills in writing imaginative stories and narratives. In Year 6, work on biographies was of a high standard. However, in some classes, pupils were not given enough opportunities to apply the writing skills they had learned.
- We next looked at the action leaders are taking to increase the numbers of pupils attaining the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics combined at the end of key stage 2. For the last two years, the outcomes for pupils achieving the higher standards at the end of key stage 2 have been below the national average. You had accurately identified this as an area for improvement.
- Leaders have led staff training to promote high levels of challenge in the classroom. The school has developed more accurate monitoring and assessment information. Regular scrutiny of books enables leaders to give guidance to teachers on how to accelerate pupils' progress. This has led to well-targeted interventions for key groups, including for the most able pupils. Current assessment information shows that an increased number of pupils are now on track to meet the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Finally, we looked at the wider curriculum. We agreed to focus particularly on music, art and the humanities in key stage 2. Pupils spoken to said how much they enjoyed the rich and varied curriculum on offer. Parents also said how much they appreciated the way the school ensured that their children benefited from a broad and balanced curriculum.
- In music, pupils are given the opportunity to learn the recorder, the ukulele and percussion instruments. The school works closely with the local authority music service, and pupils spoke about how they enjoyed workshops of African drumming and Indian tabla drums. Pupils are also given the opportunity to learn composition and musical notation. Art displays around the school show a wide variety of work on display. This includes painting, art history and puppet-making using fabrics. The themes chosen often link in to work the pupils are doing in writing. A drama leader works in every class in the school, and pupils are enthusiastic about this area of the curriculum. Humanities are recorded in the creative curriculum books. In Year 2, pupils were writing diary entries on

the Great Fire of London. The history curriculum is being well covered, with topics as varied as the Stone Age and the Mayans. Pupils are applying their writing skills in history. In Year 6, pupils wrote extensively about different aspects of the Second World War. We saw some good examples of work in geography – in particular, work in Year 2 on Kenya. You recognise that geographical enquiry skills need to be developed further and have taken action to implement a new scheme of work next year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on the developments in writing so that more pupils make good or better progress at the end of key stage 2
- more pupils attain the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics combined at the end of key stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Westminster, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Harrow. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sean Flood
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held discussions with you and other senior and middle leaders. I spoke with representatives from the local authority and held a meeting with five governors, including the chair. I spoke with pupils in class, in structured settings and informally. I also spoke to parents. I observed pupils' behaviour in class, in the playgrounds and as they moved around the school. I scrutinised pupils' work in a wide range of subjects. I heard readers across the school and spoke with pupils about the books they are reading. I made visits to all classes, alongside senior leaders. I also visited the Nursery and the provision for two-year-olds. I examined the school's progress-tracking information and assessment records. A wide range of documentation concerning safeguarding, welfare and attendance was scrutinised. I also looked at behaviour and bullying incident logs. I considered the responses of 85 parents to Parent View, the responses of pupils and staff to Ofsted's online surveys, and the school's own internal surveys.