

# St George's CofE Primary School

The Hoskers, Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancashire BL5 2FB

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- In recent years, turbulence in the leadership of the school has hindered the progress pupils make at key stage 2.
- In 2016 and 2017, pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were significantly below the national average.
- The quality of teaching across the school, particularly at key stage 2, is inconsistent. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what middle-ability and higher-ability pupils are capable of achieving.
- Leaders and teachers do not deploy teaching assistants to best effect. Nobody holds them to account effectively for the quality of their work.
- Although the curriculum is suitably broad, leaders have not ensured that some subjects, such as geography, design and technology and computing, are taught in depth. Monitoring arrangements for these subjects are in their infancy.
- Activities do not always challenge pupils to do their very best. At times, learning opportunities provided do not stimulate their passion for learning.
- Some teachers are not fully confident in their use of the new assessment system. As a result, activities that they plan are not consistently well matched to pupils' learning needs.
- The Nursery provision is not of the same high standard as that on offer in the Reception classes.

### The school has the following strengths

- In the short time the headteacher and his deputy have been in post, they have demonstrated the skills and steely determination to turn the school around.
- Outcomes for pupils in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics are good.
- Children make good progress in Reception class, and so are well prepared for Year 1.
- Following a review of governance, governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They are holding leaders more fully to account.
- Standards of behaviour are good. Children feel safe and most parents and carers are positive about the school.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment at key stage 2 in order to improve the progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils, particularly those of middle ability and the most able, can do
  - ensuring that teachers become more confident in the use of the new system for assessment, so that their assessment of pupils' learning is more accurate
  - ensuring that teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' learning needs and capabilities, and that will engage learners across a wide range of subjects
  - making sure that teaching assistants are deployed effectively and thus have the maximum impact on pupils' progress.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - developing further the role of middle leaders of subjects such as geography, design and technology and computing to ensure that they have a greater influence on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in their subjects
  - ensuring that the performance of teaching assistants is monitored effectively.
- Improve further the Nursery provision, so that it is of the same high standard as that on offer in the Reception classes.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher and his deputy took up their posts in 2016. They have worked well as a team. Together they have ensured that everyone is focused on making rapid improvements in the school. They are beginning to turn the fortunes of the school around. Leaders' actions are quickly improving the quality of education and enabling current pupils in key stage 2 to make swifter progress.
- Senior leaders lead the school with honesty and integrity. They recognise the challenge that still lies ahead of them, but the impact of their actions to date shows that they have the capacity to bring about further improvements.
- Good procedures are now in place to monitor the quality of teaching in most subjects. The feedback given to teachers after lesson observations focuses sharply on the progress and learning that has taken place for different groups of pupils.
- There is a strong focus on continuing professional development to ensure that teachers' skills are kept fresh and up to date. Those new to the profession are supported well by school leaders. Leaders are ensuring that any remaining weaknesses and inconsistencies in teaching practice are being dealt with swiftly with effective advice, guidance and support.
- Targets set for teachers as part of their performance management, relating to pupils' progress, are now more aspirational and directly linked to the school's main priorities. As a result, teachers are held fully to account for the progress that their pupils make.
- There are no systems in place to monitor and evaluate the contribution that teaching assistants make to pupils' achievement. As a result, leaders are unaware of whether best use is being made of these valuable members of staff.
- Leaders of English and mathematics know their subjects well. As a result of decisive action, progress is now improving in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at key stage 2. For example, staff have received training to enhance their skills in all of these subjects.
- The curriculum effectively meets the needs of pupils, and is suitably broad in scope. Leaders of subjects such as history, science and physical education (PE) monitor their areas of responsibility closely. They have a clear understanding of pupils' skills and the progress that they make as they move through the school.
- Systems to monitor subjects such as geography, design and technology and computing are not as well developed. Leaders of these subjects do not offer clear guidance to teachers about what pupils should typically know and be able to do by the end of each year. Consequently, there is no clear progression in pupils' key knowledge, skills and understanding. The headteacher acknowledges that these subjects are not taught in sufficient depth.
- A wide range of out-of-school activities such as cross-country running, dance and drama broadens children's experiences and ignites their passion for learning. Particularly noteworthy is the choir, which performs at community events.
- Leaders are taking care to monitor closely the use of the pupil premium funding. This

money is now being used more effectively to support the small group of disadvantaged pupils academically, socially and emotionally. As a result, the progress that this group of pupils make is improving.

- Effective use is made of the funding to support the very small proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The money is spent wisely to develop the role of the SEN coordinator. This ensures that these pupils receive targeted support and timely interventions to ensure that their individual needs are met well.
- British values such as democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law are threaded through many aspects of the school's work. There is a varied range of opportunities to allow children to become aware of similarities and differences between different faiths and cultures.
- The sports premium is spent well. Specialist coaches are employed to deliver a broad range of sporting opportunities. Pupils take part in a good range of inter-school competitive sports such as football, cross-country running and netball. Teachers work alongside specialist staff, thereby developing their own skills in delivering high-quality PE lessons.
- Most parents are supportive of all aspects of the school's work. They embrace the caring atmosphere that the school provides and the polite, respectful attitudes seen throughout the school. A few parents expressed some concerns about the recent number of staff changes. Leaders strive to ensure that any staff changes do not have a negative impact on pupils' progress.
- The school's website is bright and easy to navigate. It provides parents with a wealth of information to give them a clear understanding of the education that their children receive at St George's Primary School.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are regular visitors to the school and are supportive of the headteacher.
- They have a secure understanding of the school's priorities for development and the progress that pupils make.
- There has been a recent review of governance. Governors have reviewed their roles and matched their skills to different aspects of school improvement. As a result, they are now in a better position to challenge senior leaders more effectively than they have done previously.
- Governors have received training from the local authority. This ensures that they have the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles with greater efficiency.
- Governors monitor the budget well and ensure that they effectively carry out their duties with regard to safeguarding.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All safeguarding training is up to date. As a result, staff are fully conversant with safeguarding procedures and are aware of procedures to follow should they be

concerned about a pupil's welfare.

- Those who have designated responsibility for safeguarding and recruitment are trained to an appropriate level.
- There are comprehensive procedures in place for the recruitment and selection of staff.
- The single central record is compliant with current guidelines, and the identity of visitors to the school is closely checked.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly within key stage 2 and in some subjects.
- Teachers do not make effective use of the school's new assessment system to monitor the progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils in their classes. As a result, teachers do not consistently ensure that learning activities are appropriately matched to pupils' abilities.
- In spite of more aspirational targets with regard to pupils' progress, some teachers still do not have high enough expectations of what some pupils are capable of achieving. This is true predominately of middle- and higher-ability pupils. At times, these pupils are provided with activities which they find too easy and which prevent them from thinking harder and more deeply.
- The deployment of some teaching assistants is not effective. The difference that they make across the school is not measured effectively. The progress that pupils make as a result of their support is not analysed as effectively as it could be. Sometimes their contribution to pupils' learning is not always clear.
- There are inconsistencies in how well different areas of the curriculum beyond English and mathematics are taught. The teaching of history, PE and science is strong. As a result, pupils are becoming keen historians, scientists and sport enthusiasts. For example, they talk with enthusiasm about the Great Fire of London and can quote dates and times of this monumental event in history. They carry out experiments to test the corrosion properties of different drinks on hard-boiled eggs. Conversely, teaching is not as effective at deepening pupils' learning in subjects such as geography, design and technology and computing.
- As a result of recent initiatives and tighter assessment, the quality of reading, writing and mathematics is improving, most notably at key stage 2. Teachers give pupils more opportunities to write at length and across genres. There is also evidence of teachers giving more attention to developing pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Some staff make good use of questioning to probe and deepen pupils' learning.
- Over time, the quality of teaching in key stage 1 has been stronger. This is reflected in the good outcomes achieved by pupils in key stage 1 in recent years.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe in school, they are keen to learn and they enjoy the wide range of activities provided.
- The Christian values of the school are celebrated through many aspects of its work. Raising money for charity is important to pupils at St George's Primary School. They also contribute food parcels to those less fortunate than themselves through food banks.
- Pupils contribute to the school's decision-making, for example as members of the school council. They are aware of global issues and healthy living through assemblies and curriculum areas such as personal, social and health education.
- Pupils enthuse about their outdoor learning programme. Here, pupils of all ages are encouraged to review and assess the risks of den-building, tree-climbing and camping on the school grounds, under the watchful eye of the adults present.
- Pupils, particularly those in key stage 2, have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying. They told inspectors that bullying at this school is rare. Behaviour logs confirm that this is the case.
- Older pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe when online. They recognise the dangers of disclosing their password to strangers. Younger pupils' awareness of safety and welfare is appropriate for their age group.
- Authors and actors are regular visitors to the school. They talk to pupils about developing their writing and acting skills. These aspirational talks have a positive impact on pupils' work and expectations.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, articulate and a credit to the school and their families.
- Pupils look smart in their school uniform and make visitors to the school feel welcome.
- Pupils enjoy socialising and chatting with their friends at lunchtime. Older pupils enjoy helping the younger ones.
- Behaviour around the school and in class is good. However, when activities are not matched to their needs or when learning time is wasted, pupils get distracted and fidgety and their attention wanders.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their rates of attendance, which are in line with national average and improving. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, confirmed that their children were happy coming to school.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Recent published data shows that outcomes over the last two years at the end of key stage 2 have declined, particularly in reading and mathematics. In 2017, the progress that pupils made at the end of key stage 2 in mathematics and reading was in the bottom 10% of schools nationally, while attainment was also below average. Attainment in writing was stronger and was more in line with other schools, although progress in writing was also below average.
- The efforts of leaders and teachers have ensured that the tide is now turning in key stage 2. From observing lessons and looking at work in current pupils' books, it is clear that outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are improving strongly. However, there is still more to be done. On too many occasions, pupils, in particular those of middle ability, are given work that is too easy and does not challenge them to reach the higher levels of which they are more than capable.
- Progress and outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 are a strength of the school. Over the last two years, pupils have made good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards was also above the national average.
- Outcomes in phonics have been consistently strong in recent years. The proportion of pupils who achieve the Year 1 phonics check is typically above the national average.
- Pupils enjoy reading. A good range of fiction and non-fiction books appeal to pupils' interests, including those of boys. Pupils read with fluency and expression. They talk about their favourite authors and the types of books that they enjoy. However, at times they find their reading too easy and not well matched to their abilities.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is low. However, as a result of more appropriate use of the additional funding to support these groups of pupils they are now making secure progress in their learning.
- Pupils achieve well in subjects such as history, PE and science as a result of effective teaching.

## Early years provision

## Good

- Children get off to a flying start in the early years. They start in the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are broadly typical for their age. However, their language and physical skills are less strong. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is consistently above the national average, which represents good progress. Children leave the early years well prepared for their transition into Year 1.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths of the provision and priorities for development. She recognises that, although improving, the provision in Nursery does not reflect the high standards evident in both of the Reception classes.
- The early years lead has correctly identified that boys do not perform as well as girls in

reading, writing and mathematics. Prompt action has been taken. For example, mathematical activities now engage boys well, both in the classrooms and outside. Books which appeal to boys' interests are available in the learning environment. Boys use their knowledge of phonics well and, as a result, their reading and writing skills are improving.

- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are engaging and enthusiastic. They share warm relationships with the children and are attentive to their needs. Children play well together and are respectful to each other. Standards of behaviour are good because the children are so busy and engaged that they have no time to squabble.
- Children feel safe. Routines have been established in the early years, so that children understand what is expected of them. The learning environment is inviting and well resourced. Children have ample space to move around freely and learn and play together. They build relationships well.
- The teaching of phonics is effective and develops children's ability to link letters to sounds at an age-appropriate level. Phonics skills are woven through all areas of the children's learning. Consequently, children make strong gains in reading and writing.
- Children's progress is closely tracked and the activities provided cover all aspects of the early years curriculum. For example, children have a wide range of opportunities to count, identify shapes and solve mathematical problems. A broad range of writing activities is available in independent play areas. Children enjoy a varied range of creative opportunities which encourage them to play imaginatively and develop their artistic talents.
- The school has developed positive relationships with parents. Transition arrangements into the early years are effective. Parents are kept well informed of the progress their children make in the early years. Parents typically commented: 'The staff definitely know my child's strengths and needs and tailor teaching to his individual needs.'
- The strong culture of safeguarding and welfare evident in the rest of the school is replicated in the early years.



## School details

Unique reference number	131038
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10037781

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	327
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Chris Bracegirdle
Headteacher	Mr Philip Ivory
Telephone number	01942 813 069
Website	<a href="http://www.st-georges.bolton.sch.uk">www.st-georges.bolton.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@st-georges.bolton.sch.uk">office@st-georges.bolton.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2013

## Information about this school

- St George's Church of England Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher took up his post in April 2016 and the deputy headteacher joined the school in June 2016.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are below national averages.
- The school meets the government's floor standards.
- The school receives support brokered through the local authority. It also works collaboratively with a cluster of schools in the local community.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school.
- Inspectors examined a range of pupils' work in mathematics and English and from across the curriculum.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, both individually and during class activities.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents at the start of the day as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 48 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and five staff who completed the staff survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at playtimes, lunchtimes and when moving around the school.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, middle leaders, staff and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at attendance and behaviour records.
- Inspectors reviewed the safeguarding documentation and considered how this related to daily practice, as well as speaking with staff and pupils about safeguarding.

## Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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