

St George's CofE Primary School and Nursery

Birmingham Road, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 2BX

Inspection dates

25–26 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders are not able to sustain recent improvements to the school or develop them further without significant levels of support.
- Leaders are not prioritising the most important things they need to do. They take on too many things to improve at once. As a result, the important improvements that they have planned to do are not always achieved.
- Plans for improvement do not have precise enough targets. This limits their usefulness to bring about improvement.
- The capacity of the recently formed governing body is limited. Governors are not systematically checking the school's performance, partly because leaders are not providing them with enough information.
- Some pupils call others names, using prejudicial words. The leaders' work to promote pupils' understanding of diversity has not been successful.
- Although the quality of teaching is improving, there is still some weak practice. Curriculum planning is not yet promoting pupils' progress well enough.
- Pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is patchy. Pupils make the weakest progress in key stage 1. The most able pupils are not given enough challenge and so they underachieve.
- The mathematics curriculum is too narrow because there is a lack of opportunities for pupils to do reasoning and problem-solving.
- Children in the early years do not achieve well.
- Although safeguarding is effective, staff's understanding of some issues is not consistently strong.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' attend well, arrive at school on time and the number who are frequently absent has fallen sharply.
- With a more stable team, teaching is improving and standards are starting to rise in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) and in key stage 2.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management at the school, by:
 - developing the capacity of senior leaders to secure further improvement without the need for significant levels of external support
 - ensuring that leaders effectively prioritise the key areas for improvement and maintain their focus on these areas to bring about sustainable improvement
 - ensuring that plans for improvement have clear and measurable targets
 - improving the accuracy of checks which leaders make on teaching and ensure that teachers implement the recommendations made by these checks
 - improving governance by ensuring that the governing body is provided with the necessary information so that it has the capacity to fulfil its duties and hold leaders to account
 - implementing recommendations made at the December 2018 pupil premium review to improve disadvantaged pupils' achievement
 - building on improving safeguarding practice by leaders and governors checking more carefully the staff's understanding and providing more tailored training
 - strengthening the leadership and management of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
 - revising the school's equality objectives to strengthen work to improve pupils' appreciation of diversity in modern Britain and reduce the level of prejudicial name-calling.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - sharing more widely the existing good practice at the school
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve so that they set more challenging work, particularly for the most able
 - providing pupils with frequent high-quality opportunities to deepen their understanding of mathematics through problem-solving and reasoning
 - providing training and support for teachers in key stage 1 so that they can ensure that pupils in their class make good progress and achieve better standards.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - ensuring that pupils understand the meaning of the words they use, so that they do not cause offence, or upset, to other pupils within the school.

- Building on the very recent improvements to the quality of teaching in the early years, by:
 - improving the teaching of literacy and numeracy so that children achieve well in these areas
 - providing a broad range of demanding and interesting activities so that children achieve well across all areas of the early years curriculum and are better prepared for their next stage of learning.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have made improvements since starting their roles of sharing the headship in September 2018. They have, however, remained too reliant on the external support that has been put in place, particularly from the Black Pear Trust. As a result, they do not yet have the capacity to maintain recent improvements. Without this support, there is a danger that the school's performance could slip back.
- Leaders take on too many things to improve at once. Although faced with many challenges when starting their roles, they are not clear about the most important priorities for improvement. This means that, as they start new initiatives, other important existing priorities are not completed. They have, for example, not put in place many of the recommendations from the school's pupil premium review to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not have precise enough targets. This means leaders are not always clear about the improvements that they need to see nor are they able to measure the school's progress towards their aspirations. The recently appointed English and mathematics leaders are now developing better plans but this is with the help of external support, which indicates how reliant the school remains on help from leaders of other schools.
- Leaders' checks on teaching and other areas of the school's performance are not accurate and this limits leaders' capacity to bring about improvement. At times, the right guidance is not always provided to staff. Leaders do not carefully check that staff have made requested improvements. For instance, during the inspection some issues raised at previous checks remained unresolved.
- Leaders' plans to improve disadvantaged pupils' achievement have not fully taken account of weaknesses highlighted by last year's national assessments. The weak achievement of this group in writing at key stage 2 was not identified or addressed. The external review of the plans showed the need for many improvements to the plan. Inspection evidence shows that few of these recommendations have been implemented. However, where aspects of the plan have been implemented, there has been some improvement in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The school's plans to promote pupils' understanding of equality and diversity have not been successful. Leaders have not effectively responded to prejudicial name-calling from some pupils. This limits pupils' moral and cultural development as well as causing upset and distress. Spiritual development is better promoted through the school's values and curriculum.
- Leaders have required much support from the Black Pear Trust to improve provision for pupils with SEND. The trust has provided weekly support through one of their special educational needs coordinators, who has changed interventions and provided training to staff. Speech and language support has also been refocused.
- Leaders have agreed the values and aspirations that underpin the school's curriculum. A recent focus on science, technology and mathematics captured pupils' imagination and interest. Leaders have started to organise learning into topics but have not yet

ensured that learning is well sequenced so that pupils' build on their knowledge and achieve well. The school's curriculum to promote pupils' personal, social and health education is not effective and has a limited impact on pupils' understanding of diversity of life in modern Britain.

- Leaders have built almost a new team of teaching staff from September 2018. The team are united and committed to their work and the school's success. Staff have benefited from a great deal of professional development, much of which has been provided through the Black Pear Trust, and this is helping to improve teaching and raise standards.
- Leaders have been successful in improving pupils' behaviour during lessons. New strategies, training and higher expectations mean that pupils behave well in lessons. Pupils respond quickly to these new methods and the behaviour 'zone boards'.
- Parents have a growing level of confidence in leaders. They appreciate how leaders have formed a more settled staff team following the high turnover of staff during the previous academic year. However, a number of parents spoke to inspectors and expressed views through the Parent View questionnaire that concerns are not always quickly resolved.

Governance of the school

- Governance is not effective. Almost all governors joined the board in September 2018 but a number of members will have left by July 2019 and the governing body does not have the capacity to carry out its role with such a limited, albeit committed, membership.
- Governors' work has been hampered by weak systems. Records of meetings are not fit for purpose. The information provided for leaders is very limited. This prevents governors being able to ask senior leaders questions and thoroughly check on the school's performance. At times, governors are carrying out roles which leaders need to do such as making checks on the single central record. This undermines their strategic role.
- Governors have ensured that financial checks are in place and that school finances are monitored and meet requirements. However, the use of additional funding, such as the sports premium and funding for pupils with SEND and the disadvantaged, is not effectively monitored by the governing body.
- The chair of the governing body is very committed and makes regular visits to the school. He recognises the issues facing the school and seeks solutions.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that improved safeguarding procedures are in place and have had audits to help them check this. Recruitment checks are made and staff receive necessary training, including on the government's 'Prevent' duty. However, leaders do not make sufficient checks on staff's understanding. They have not picked up the information that a few staff do not have a secure grasp of this aspect. As a result, leaders have not provided specific training to improve understanding. Staff, however,

are alert to concerns and know what to do if issues arise.

- Leaders have trained another member of staff to become a designated leader of safeguarding. This is to ensure that there is enough capacity to keep a watchful eye on pupils. These leaders work well with outside agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Learning about how to keep safe is a part of the curriculum. Pupils, for example, have a good knowledge of e-safety drawn from assemblies and lessons.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is variable. It is stronger in parts of key stage 2 but less effective in the early years and key stage 1. However, teaching has improved since the establishment of a new team in September 2018 and many parents commented on this to inspectors. The Black Pear Trust has supported many of these improvements.
- Teachers' expectations are often not high enough. As a result, sometimes the work pupils are set is not hard enough and so pupils achieve less well than they should. The most able pupils underachieve because often they work at the level expected for the majority and the questions and tasks that teachers set do not make them think deeply enough about their learning. Sometimes the lower-attaining pupils receive too much adult support rather than working independently, which holds back their progress.
- The teaching of mathematics does not challenge pupils because it is too focused on ensuring that pupils become skilled at mathematical procedures and facts. This is sometimes because of a need to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge from previous years. However, when pupils show a secure understanding, opportunities are often missed to strengthen pupils' knowledge and interest in mathematics through problem-solving and reasoning activities. This is particularly the case in key stage 1.
- Sometimes less effective teaching results from gaps in teachers' own subject knowledge, which limits pupils' understanding.
- In key stage 2, when teaching reading, teachers are providing good-quality books for pupils to read and talk about, which is developing their skills of comprehension. These books are exposing pupils to a rich vocabulary which is particularly helping to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. These books are also sparking pupils' interest and enjoyment of reading.
- The teaching of phonics has improved in key stage 1. A new phonics curriculum, underpinned by much training, has improved teaching. The teaching of phonics is becoming more consistent and gaps in knowledge are increasingly being addressed. Pupils have opportunities to read books that are well matched to their knowledge of phonics.
- Well-considered guidance provided by teachers helps to improve pupils' understanding of their work, particularly in key stage 2. However, at times, across both key stages 1 and 2, staff are not consistently implementing the school's marking policy.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Pupils' appreciation of diversity in modern Britain is not well developed by the school. Their lack of understanding has resulted in some pupils using prejudicial terms to upset others. Although pupils do not always understand the seriousness of many of the words they use, some associate certain words about other people's personal characteristics in a negative manner and use them to cause insult. Pupils told inspectors that this has been going on for a while. Although leaders are aware of some of this name-calling, their work to develop pupils' understanding of diversity and to respect other people's personal characteristics has not been successful.
- Pupils have developed positive attitudes to their learning, enjoy lessons and are keen to do well.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and are confident. They understand the importance of eating and living healthily. They found the school's recent 'well-being week' helpful. Pupils know how to stay safe online and speak with expertise about how to do so.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Although pupils' behaviour has improved in lessons, pupils say that some do not behave well when they have less adult supervision, and at other times of the school day. It is at these times, for example, when prejudicial name-calling occurs and some pupils do not follow the school's rules.
- Pupils are aware of the signs of bullying and how to deal with it when it occurs. However, some pupils spoke of incidents that were not resolved. A number of parents, when talking to inspectors, felt less confident about the way the school promotes good behaviour and deals with bullying.
- Pupils' attendance has improved, with attendance rates rising to figures that are above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are frequently absent has also improved and fallen to below the national average. No group attends poorly but improvement is less apparent among disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Work in pupils' books and the school's own assessment information show that pupils have made patchy progress this year and are not making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of both key stages 1 and 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics remains below average, as it was in 2018. However, pupils' work in some key stage 2 classes points to the fact that pupils' progress is beginning to improve. There is little sign of this in key stage 1.

- The most able pupils do not achieve well. Their work shows that the lack of challenge in lessons has limited their progress this year. As a result, the proportions of pupils who reached the higher standards remains below average. However, by the end of key stage 2, there has been an increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in writing.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils remains varied. Some disadvantaged pupils are achieving better than before and they are showing more positive attitudes to their learning, particularly in key stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils are beginning to close the gap with other pupils at the school but there is still some way to go to do this with other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with SEND do not make good progress. The achievement of the group has improved as a result of the support provided by a special educational needs coordinator from the Black Pear Trust who has supported staff to improve their teaching of pupils with SEND. However, the progress made by pupils with SEND varies from class to class.
- Pupils' skills in phonics have improved this year. The proportion reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Years 1 and 2 has risen considerably and is now close to the national average. More pupils are reaching expectations for their age in this area although, with some cohorts, there are still many pupils who have gaps in their knowledge that limit their ability to read and write well.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- From starting points which are below those typical for children of nursery age, children do not make consistently strong progress in the early years. As a result, the children currently in the Reception Year are attaining below the national average in all areas except for in expressive art and design. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year remains below average and therefore some children are not well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Achievement in literacy and mathematics is not yet good. Teaching is not always effective in ensuring that children make the progress required to secure the standard of literacy and mathematical skills which they need. The low levels of attainment that some children reach in literacy and mathematics hold their learning back as they move into Year 1.
- The school has received considerable support from the Black Pear Trust to improve the leadership and management of the early years, along with the teaching, learning and assessments in this part of the school. This has helped to improve teaching, ensured that assessments made by staff are more accurate and recently improved children's progress. Without this support, the leadership of the early years remains weak.
- The activities within the early years curriculum do not always present a high enough level of challenge across a full range of subject areas. During adult-led sessions children achieve better because the activities match their needs more closely. However, other tasks, particularly during independent learning, are not as challenging and this limits children's achievements.
- Parents are involved in their children's learning and encouraged to contribute to

assessments. They receive support from staff at the school to help their children's learning and development. They value how approachable the early years staff are.

- The children enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They are happy and enjoy their learning and opportunities to play. Children feel well cared for by the staff. Safeguarding procedures are effective in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	135055
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10058451

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shazu Miah
Headteacher	Clare Snape and Louise Low
Telephone number	01562 824206
Website	www.stgeorgesprimaryandnurseryschool.com
Email address	head@st-georges-kidd.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school was judged inadequate for its overall effectiveness and in need special measures at its last inspection. Since then, there has been a change of headteacher. Two of the school's senior staff became acting headteachers in September 2018. The school has undergone significant change since its last inspection, appointing almost a new team of teachers and governors in September 2018.
- The school has been receiving support commissioned by the local authority from the Black Pear Trust. It has also received support from the Diocese of Worcester.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The number of pupils on roll has fallen since the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is in line with the national average. The largest minority ethnic group is of Bangladeshi heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the

national average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes to observe pupils' learning. Most of these visits were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors looked at pupils' books in reading, phonics, writing and mathematics, along with a wide range of work in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils at different times of the school day, including while in lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors met with groups of children to find out about their attitudes to learning, their behaviour at the school and understanding of how to keep safe. Inspectors listened to a number of pupils read from key stage 1.
- Meetings were held with both acting headteachers and subject leaders. Inspectors met with staff, members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and representatives of the Black Pear Trust. Inspectors also had telephone conversations with advisers from the local authority and the Diocese of Worcester.
- Inspectors considered 33 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, which included 16 free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school's self-evaluation, information related to pupils' progress and attainment and checks made on the quality of teaching. Documentation relating to the work of the governing body, local-authority-commissioned monitoring reports and the school's recent pupil premium review were also considered.

Inspection team

Jonathan Moore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Johanne Clifton	Ofsted Inspector

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