

# Inspection of St George's Infant School and Nursery

Barrington Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 7RW

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Inspection dates: 8–9 January 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Most pupils behave well and there is little bullying. However, a significant minority of pupils behave in highly inappropriate ways. This interrupts other pupils' learning and has a negative effect on the well-being of staff and pupils. In particular, some pupils are frequently violent towards staff.

Pupils' experiences in class depend on which class they are in. Too many pupils do not do well enough in school. Some teachers in key stage 1 have low expectations and do not do enough to help pupils to improve their work. This is not the case in the early years, where expectations are higher and teaching more consistent.

Pupils attend an interesting range of trips to broaden their horizons. The school has recently reintroduced after-school clubs. These are well suited to some pupils and so they benefit from them. However, leaders do not know which clubs and activities would meet the interests of other pupils. These pupils miss out.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

For some time, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 has been too low. The standards achieved by pupils currently in the school are still poor. This is because the curriculum is not planned or taught well enough.

The curriculum is poorly organised and curriculum plans are unhelpful. Much of what is taught, when and how, is left to teachers to decide for themselves. For example, in writing each teacher decides when they will teach different aspects of the national curriculum. In science, work from Year 1 is repeated in Year 2. In reading, there is a lack of planning for how the books pupils read improve their ability to read over time.

Leaders do not do enough to check what teachers have taught. Leaders do not know whether pupils have covered the topics they need to. Pupils fall behind because some teachers have low expectations and no clear plans to set out what they should teach.

Too many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the support they should. There are high-quality plans in place which show clearly what should be done to support the pupils. However, teachers' use of the strategies set out in these plans is too inconsistent. Some teachers do not use them well. Leaders have not done enough to check on the use of the plans this academic year.

The quality of education in the early years is better than in key stage 1 and has led to increased attainment for children at the end of Reception. Teachers and learning support assistants work together to good effect. They deliver phonics well. They assess pupils' understanding effectively and adapt their plans appropriately to meet children's needs. Teachers and learning support assistants have established clear

routines for children. However, while attainment in the early years has improved, not enough consideration has been given to preparing children for key stage 1. The transition between Reception and Year 1 is disjointed. There is no overarching plan for how pupils should progress from the start of their time in the early years to the end of key stage 1. This hampers children's progress when they move from one key stage to the next.

Behaviour management has improved, but is not having sufficient impact. There are frequent assaults on staff by pupils. Pupils throw things in lessons. Some pupils fail to follow basic rules. While the majority of pupils behave well, not enough is done to stop the unacceptable behaviour of a few. Staff feel protected from bullying and harassment, but they do not feel protected from violence from pupils.

Over time, attendance at the school has not been high enough. Overall attendance has been declining over the last three years. Over the same period, persistent absence has increased. Absence rates for pupils with SEND have been too high since 2017.

Some of leaders' endeavours to promote pupils' personal development work well, such as the targeted support for pupils to help them build their self-esteem. However, the quality of work beyond the academic curriculum is too variable. Leaders do not do as much as they should to ensure they cater for the range of interests pupils have. Taught elements of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education are not delivered consistently well in key stage 1.

The school is in a period of change. There is, at present, no permanent headteacher. This has restricted the capacity of leaders to drive improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders maintain an accurate record of recruitment checks on staff who work in the school. They make sure staff have up-to-date training. Safeguarding records are well kept. They show leaders' timely actions to support pupils about whom there are concerns. This includes working with external agencies where appropriate. Leaders are vigilant in pursuing the support pupils need.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident in staff to manage the rare incidents of bullying effectively.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Key stage 1 curriculum plans do not determine what pupils should learn and when. Leaders do not monitor teachers' work closely enough to know what needs to improve. This lack of strategic planning and oversight leads to pupils not

covering the key stage 1 curriculum sufficiently well and results in pupils significantly underachieving at the end of key stage 1. Leaders should set out clearly for teachers what is to be taught and when, and monitor the implementation of the curriculum to ensure it is delivered at a consistently high standard.

- Leaders have not set out how pupils should progress from the early years to the end of key stage 1. Pupils are not prepared well to move from one key stage to the next and so their education falters in Year 1. Pupils also have disjointed experiences through key stage 1. Leaders need to make sure that pupils' education develops progressively from the time they join the school to the time they leave.
- Leaders' strategies to improve behaviour have not had sufficient impact on the extremely poor behaviour of a minority of pupils. This has a negative impact on the quality of education and the well-being of staff and pupils. Leaders need to establish systems to eradicate extreme poor behaviour and establish good behaviour as the norm.
- Attendance, including for pupils with SEND, is too low. Pupils miss too much time in school. Leaders should improve attendance, including for pupils with SEND, so that it is at least in line with the national average for primary schools.
- The quality of provision for pupils with SEND varies too much depending on which teacher pupils have. This means some pupils' needs are not met. Leaders should ensure that the support strategies they plan are implemented effectively by all teachers.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development is too variable. Too many pupils miss out on high-quality support to meet their needs, interests and talents. Leaders should ensure that their work to support pupils' personal development is coherently planned to cater for the range of pupils in the school and that it is implemented consistently well.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114705
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121353
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	292
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jacqui Moore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Vicarey (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-georgesinfantandnursery.co.uk">www.st-georgesinfantandnursery.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has left the school. The school is currently led by an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- We did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, science and art. We met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- We spoke with the acting headteacher, other leaders, the local authority school effectiveness partner and with governors.

- We reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings. We spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding and held a meeting to discuss the leadership of safeguarding.
- We considered the 35 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, the 28 responses to the free-text option and the 17 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted’s survey of pupils’ views.
- We spoke with parents as they arrived at the school in the morning and met with pupils from different year groups to discuss their views of the school. We spoke with staff about different aspects of provision.

### **Inspection team**

Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Kathryn Herlock	Ofsted Inspector
Joseph Figg	Ofsted Inspector

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