

Inspection of St George's CofE Primary Academy

Admiralty Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon PL1 3RX

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

St George's is an inclusive school. Pupils accept and celebrate differences. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. They ensure that everyone has opportunities to experience success. Staff take the time to understand pupils' strengths and areas to be developed. One parent, whose view represented the views of many, told us, 'St George's brings out the best in all pupils.'

Pupils said that bullying rarely happens. They are confident that if it did happen, staff would act swiftly. Pupils feel happy and safe in the school's calm environment. They value the relationships they have with adults. Pupils told us that they do not have many worries because there is always someone to help them.

Pupils enjoy contributing to school life. They have a voice in decision-making through roles on the school council. Pupils have access to a wide range of purposeful extra-curricular activities. For example, the art club recently showcased its work in a local gallery. Parents are supportive of the school. They appreciate the strong communication from staff. Parents praised leaders' dedication to pupils' well-being throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Pupils love to read. Teachers invite 'mystery' visitors into school to read to pupils. Pupils can explain the types of books they like to read. They read widely, from a range of authors. Children in the Reception class get off to a strong start because teachers prioritise phonics. Teachers provide opportunities to develop early reading skills in the independent learning areas. Children make the most of these opportunities. Parents receive guidance from teachers to replicate learning activities at home. This supports children well in learning to read.

Pupils read books which contain the sounds that they know. This helps them to develop into fluent readers. Teachers identify pupils who find reading difficult, and provide them with extra help. However, some adults do not have the skills they need to help pupils to learn to read well enough. Some are unclear about the school's approaches to supporting pupils with phonics.

Leaders have carefully considered what they want pupils to learn. The school's curriculum reflects the school's motto, 'building on firm foundations'. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is sequenced well, so that pupils can build their knowledge over time. Learning is interesting and engaging. In mathematics, pupils use practical resources to support their learning and deepen their understanding. Middle leaders are becoming more confident in their subject leadership roles. They understand what pupils need to learn. However, assessment is not yet used precisely enough to check what pupils know and remember.

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders are proactive in their determination to secure

individualised support for pupils. Leaders combine this with thoughtful adaptations to help pupils access the curriculum successfully. Parents feel that leaders consider their views. They praised leaders for the care they show towards their children. Parents view the school as 'a happy place to learn'.

Pupils enjoy attending school. They enter the building each morning with excitement about their learning. Pupils learn about beliefs that may be different from their own. They share the view that everyone is welcome. Pupils show maturity in their understanding of equality and diversity. They have a secure understanding of different types of relationships. They know that successful relationships rely on trust and respect.

Pupils are kind and considerate. They respect the school rules. Most pupils learn how to manage their emotions well. Some pupils need extra help with this, and leaders provide effective personalised support for these pupils. Staff know pupils and their families well. Teachers apply the behaviour policy consistently. As a result, pupils are very clear about what the expectations are.

Staff feel well supported in their roles. They value leaders having an open-door policy if they have any concerns. All staff who gave their views are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the input that leaders provide to support their professional development. Leaders are aware of pressures on staff when making decisions about improvement strategies.

Governors challenge and support leaders well. They bring a range of experience to their roles. Governors have the skills to check that leaders hold an accurate view of the school. They understand and share leaders' aspirations.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe. They know staff are there to help them. All staff understand the procedures for reporting concerns. They closely monitor pupils who are vulnerable. Leaders promote a culture of 'it could happen here'.

Leaders ensure that pupils and families receive support from external agencies when they need it. Pupils know how to access help through channels such as Childline. Leaders provide training on relevant local issues, such as county lines.

Leaders ensure that the appropriate checks are completed on all adults who work in the school. These are captured accurately on the school's single central record.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have developed a curriculum that is well planned and well sequenced. However, assessment systems for some subjects are not as clear. As a result, leaders cannot be sure that pupils are learning the planned curriculum as they intended. Leaders need to put in place an agreed system to assess what pupils have learned and remembered over time.
- Pupils who fall behind with their reading are given support to catch up. However, leaders have not ensured that all adults supporting these pupils have the knowledge they need to develop pupils' phonics effectively. This slows down the progress for some pupils. Leaders must ensure that all staff have a secure understanding of the school's approach to early reading.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	139954
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10204984
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the board of directors	Andrew Bailey
Headteacher	Kelly Earnshaw
Website	www.st-georges.plymouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St George's Church of England Primary School joined the St Christopher's multi-academy trust in September 2013.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2017. The date of the next inspection is likely to be during 2022.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes, apart from the Reception class.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, members of the staff team, parents, and representatives from the trust and governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors checked the procedures for keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors visited the on-site breakfast club and after-school club.
- An inspector checked all survey responses, including seven from pupils, 11 from staff and 23 from parents. This included considering the 15 responses to Ofsted's Parent View free-text service.
- Inspectors met with pupils and staff to gather their views and find out what it is like to be part of the school.
- Inspectors looked at the school's plans for improvement, minutes of governors' meetings, monitoring documents and reports from the trust.

Inspection team

Jane Dennis, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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