

Inspection of a good school: St George's CofE Primary School

Perry Vale, Forest Hill, London SE23 2NE

Inspection dates:

26 and 27 January 2022

Outcome

St George's CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where pupils feel safe and happy. They talk about the school with excitement. They say that staff take care of them and encourage them to take risks and 'have a go'. They speak with confidence about the school's 'learner qualities' and demonstrate them through the way they learn and behave. Pupils show persistence and determination in lessons.

The school is calm and orderly. Routines are well established. Pupils understand the school's rules and know that they help them to stay safe. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils understand what bullying is. They know who to go to if they have any concerns and say that staff respond swiftly. Pupils explain that it is important to be kind to each other.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. They are ambitious in wanting pupils to be 'brave' and 'great'. This is at the heart of the curriculum and all leaders say and do.

The learning environment is attractive. The prompts on displays in lessons help pupils to think carefully about what they are learning. Teachers also use technology well to support meaningful discussions with pupils. Pupils enjoy the activities and clubs on offer.

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

Leaders introduced a curriculum with aspirational goals in all subjects. They make sure pupils' knowledge develops in a systematic way. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and provide teachers with support in delivering interesting and meaningful lessons. Teachers focus on vocabulary in the subjects that pupils study. Teachers model what pupils need to learn well. For instance, in art lessons, teachers show pupils how to develop skills in modelling, collage and weaving.

Leaders want every child to 'be a reader'. The phonics programme starts in the early years. Staff are well trained. They use songs, rhymes and games to help pupils practise

sounds that they are learning. Staff match books to the sounds pupils know. Pupils enjoy the stories teachers read to them. Leaders have considered ways parents and carers can support their children with reading at home. Staff help pupils to catch up in reading. This means that pupils achieve well from their starting points.

In the early years, children show enjoyment and independence in their learning. Staff organise activities in the classrooms and outdoors. They reflect all areas of early years learning. Leaders have plans to develop the spacious outdoor area with resources to help children learn and develop basic skills. Staff interact positively with children. They use questioning well to encourage children to think about their activities.

Staff organise and deliver mathematics lessons well. They are systematic in showing different ways of calculations. Teachers use 'sentence stems' to help pupils understand important mathematical concepts. Pupils use them to explain what they know. Children in Reception are confident in recognising and ordering numbers. Some teachers do not move on quickly those pupils who show confidence in what they are learning. Leaders are aware of this, and plans are in place to address this.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work closely with parents and external agencies to produce and review personalised support plans. Leaders have adapted some subject plans to aid teachers in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. This work is ongoing, and leaders show commitment in ensuring this remains a priority.

Pupils behave and concentrate well in lessons. Low-level disruptions to learning are few, and staff deal with them quickly when they occur. Pupils appreciate the way staff celebrate what they do well. They proudly associate their achievements with being 'curious' or 'reflective'. They enjoy the clubs and trips on offer but would welcome a greater selection to choose from. Pupils have a strong understanding of healthy eating.

Pupils learn about other religions and cultures. They speak confidently about their beliefs. They learn about artists from diverse backgrounds. They use the techniques learned from studying them to influence and inspire their excellent artwork. Pupils use 'knowledge notes' in their books to help them make connections between subjects.

There have been recent changes to the leadership team. Leaders were swift in forming an accurate view of the strengths of the school and what needs to improve. The trust provides carefully tailored support to leaders in addressing school priorities. Governors recognise the difference the curriculum is making to pupils' learning. Staff appreciate the proactive actions taken in changing the way they mark pupils' work. This has reduced teachers' workload significantly. Leaders and staff are passionate about building stronger links with families and the local community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders complete all the statutory checks for staff joining the school. They track this carefully.

Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures and systems. Safeguarding training helps them carry out their duties and responsibilities well. Leaders keep and analyse records of bullying and racist, homophobic and sexualised behaviour. These are few, and staff deal with incidents swiftly.

Leaders are tenacious in pursuing referrals made to the local authority. They place a high focus on the mental health of pupils and families.

Pupils know about staying safe online and in their community. Staff treat pupils fairly, with care and kindness.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- During lessons, some pupils show they understand a mathematical concept and are ready for the next step in their learning, but some teachers do not move them on quickly. This means that some pupils miss the opportunity to deepen what they know or apply what they understand in a different way. Leaders need to implement their plans to ensure that this happens swiftly to support pupils in making greater progress in mathematics, especially those who show they have the potential to work at a greater depth.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St George's CofE Primary School, to be good in February 2016.

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	145621
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10213880
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Catharina Stibe Hickson
Headteacher	Darren Janes
Website	www.stgeorges.lewisham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	25 February 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education Multi-Academy Trust in May 2018. The local governing body carries out some functions on behalf of the trustees, especially holding the school leaders to account.
- The headteacher has been in post since April 2021.
- St George's CofE Primary School converted to become an academy in May 2018. When its predecessor school, St George's CofE Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the chief operating officer, the chair of the governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders, a range of staff, members of the local committee, a trust education partner and an externally appointed school improvement adviser.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of curriculum plans and documents, including the school's self-evaluation of the work it does and the school improvement plan.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding arrangements by scrutinising records and the single central record, talked to leaders and staff and held discussions with pupils and parents.
- The inspector considered the views of parents and staff through Ofsted's online surveys, including 10 free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View and 21 responses from members of staff to the surveys. There were no responses from pupils.

Inspection team

Lascelles Haughton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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