

Inspection of St George's Church of England Primary School

Beaufort Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, West Midlands B16 8HY

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 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?

Pupils are happy and safe here because adults take good care of them, and they take good care of one another. The school's strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life. The school embraces the diverse community it serves and pupils show great respect for the many faiths and cultures represented here.

Pupils behave well. They respond quickly to adults' instructions and follow the school's rules sensibly. In lessons, pupils' learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Bullying is extremely rare. If it does happen, adults sort it out quickly.

Leaders set high expectations for all pupils. Pupils' attitudes embody the school's vision of 'our love of learning leads us to excellence'. Pupils show enthusiasm for learning and make strong progress. Exciting educational trips enrich school life. For example, Year 6 pupils recently took part in a Victorian themed event at the National Justice Museum.

Pupils develop empathy and respect for others through their involvement with the church and the community. They regularly contribute to a food bank and raise money for charity. Pupils enjoy participating in the school council, worship council and friendship council. This gives them a say in making decisions.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum to suit the needs of pupils, making the most of community resources. They have carefully planned the knowledge and skills they intend pupils to learn in a logical order. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well planned and targeted. Teachers adapt their teaching to provide extra support so that pupils with SEND access the full curriculum. Pupils with SEND make strong progress.

Pupils' work, particularly their writing, is of a high standard. Teachers help pupils to structure their writing well and to use increasingly varied vocabulary. Pupils have regular opportunities to recall spelling, punctuation and grammar rules. However, they do not have enough opportunities to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English. Leaders believe that even more pupils could reach really high possible standards, but progress in achieving this has been hindered by COVID-19 restrictions.

Teachers give pupils feedback about their work while they are doing it. This enables teachers to identify any mistakes or misconceptions quickly. Teachers prompt pupils to recall prior learning at the start of new lessons. This helps pupils to remember what they have been taught. Pupils talk with excitement and confidence about what they have learned. For example, during this inspection, they could explain what they had learned about rain forests and different biomes.

Leaders and staff give reading a high priority across the school. In the school's forest-themed library, pupils enjoy choosing and reading books. Most pupils read every day to an adult at school or at home. A new phonics programme is having a positive impact on pupils' reading and writing skills. Teachers value the resources and training provided for them to teach phonics well. Teaching assistants are well trained to support those pupils who find it hard to keep up. As a result, most pupils quickly gain the knowledge they need to become fluent readers. Some pupils need extra support to develop their spoken language skills. Most staff model language well. They prompt pupils to respond in full sentences. However, staff do not always seize opportunities for pupils to hear and practise precise pronunciation.

The executive headteacher, acting head of school and leaders from the Birmingham Diocesan multi-academy trust (BDMAT) provide skilled leadership. Teachers appreciate the high-quality training and support they receive. Subject leaders are continuing to develop in their roles. They support teachers well to deliver the intended curriculum. Teachers say they enjoy planning the curriculum together, and that there is an excitement about learning. Teachers say that leaders make sure their workload is manageable.

Pupils are respectful of different cultures and faiths. This reflects leaders' strong commitment to equality and diversity. Pupils develop their talents and skills beyond the classroom in lunchtime and after-school clubs. These include drama, karate and creative writing. These activities, along with strong pastoral support, support pupils to try new things and to make the most of opportunities.

The executive headteacher has ensured that recent changes in leadership have not unsettled the school. In fact, staff are optimistic about the school's future. Leaders have a strong grasp of the school's many strengths. The whole school community shares leaders' ambition for the school to be the best it can be. The executive headteacher took care to introduce herself to parents and explain the new leadership arrangements. Despite this, a small number of parents feel that leaders do not keep them fully informed about leadership changes or support for their child.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to spot signs of abuse or neglect. They know pupils and their families well. They do not ignore any behaviour changes that could be signs of vulnerability. When staff report concerns, leaders follow these up promptly and appropriately.

An experienced pastoral team signposts parents to external support when necessary. However, school staff provide effective help for most families' needs. The school food bank helped parents cope during the pandemic, and kept school staff in touch with families.

Leaders carry out rigorous pre-employment checks on staff. These are recorded and checked regularly by senior leaders. Safeguarding has a high priority across the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English. This means that pupils are not able to practise or apply their writing skills independently, or embed their learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills in extended writing tasks across the curriculum.
- Although teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils who need to improve their reading, they do not always support pupils' spoken language as effectively. This means that pupils who need more support to develop their spoken language do not make as much progress as they could. Leaders should provide further training, particularly for some support staff, about how to help pupils develop their spoken language effectively.
- Middle leaders who are new to their roles have not had the opportunity to develop leadership of their subjects until recently. As a result, the curriculum in some subjects is at a more advanced stage of development than others. Leaders should ensure that middle leaders have the support they need to develop in their leadership roles.
- A small number of parents feel that leaders do not communicate with them effectively. They feel that they are not fully involved in review meetings for their children. Leaders should review arrangements for communicating with parents in order to further strengthen relationships.

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	139267
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10211995
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Smith
Executive Headteacher	Sally Roberts
Website	www.stgeorgesb16.com
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St George's C of E Primary School is a part of BDMAT.
- Since the last inspection, an executive headteacher has taken over the running of the school in conjunction with the deputy headteacher as acting head of school.
- The predecessor school received its last section 48 inspection of its effectiveness as a church school in May 2016. It is unknown at present when the next section 48 inspection will take place. This uncertainty is partly due to disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.

- Before the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed published information about the school, and documents on the school's website.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the acting head of school and the curriculum leader to discuss the school's planned curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with BDMAT's chief executive and the director of school improvement. The lead inspector also met with the vice-chair of the local academy board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' writing across the curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers about leaders' support for their professional development and well-being.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the school's work to keep children safe.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders and support staff about pastoral support for pupils' welfare, attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Jane Spilsbury, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Parker	Ofsted Inspector

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