

Inspection of St George's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Old London Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 7DL

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this welcoming and friendly school. They appreciate the wide range of clubs and activities on offer. Pupils say that St George's gives them opportunities to try new things, especially different sports. They are excited that following the COVID-19 pandemic, sporting fixtures and trips are in full swing again. For example, some pupils enjoyed taking part in a 'Young Voices' choir performance. Others attend journalism club, where they publish the school magazine. Pupils learn a wide range of practical skills in the well-established forest school. Pupils love the forest school, with one commenting that 'it's a way to experience the wilderness'.

Pupils behave well in this calm and orderly school. Right from the start of early years, staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils also have high expectations of themselves. They feel safe and enjoy their learning. Leaders prioritise pupils' well-being and the school recently won an award for promoting pupils' well-being and resilience.

The school's Christian values underpin daily life. Teachers and pupils trust and respect each other. Pupils are almost always kind to each other. They know that adults will help them if they have any worries.

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

Since the pandemic, leaders have rightly prioritised developing a well-structured curriculum. They have set out the essential knowledge and key vocabulary that pupils need to know in every year group, including in early years. As a result, pupils remember more and explain what they are learning confidently. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well because teachers break down the curriculum into smaller steps.

Leaders train teachers who are less confident in teaching certain subjects effectively. Consequently, teachers have developed their subject expertise well. This has improved how well teachers explain ideas and plan activities. In most subjects, teachers check pupils' learning regularly. However, in some subjects, teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough.

Pupils build their knowledge well over time in most subjects. In mathematics, they develop a deep understanding and show increasingly good reasoning and problem-solving skills. However, pupils sometimes struggle to grasp more complex concepts because teachers do not use mathematical resources consistently well.

Leaders prioritise reading and have recently introduced a new early reading programme. Staff use their high-quality training to teach reading effectively. In early years, children are taught to read right from the start. Pupils in Reception have regular opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills. Teachers make sure

that pupils who are struggling to read get extra help quickly. Pupils understand the importance of reading and enjoy discussing books and authors. Reading ambassadors in Year 6 are proud to help develop younger pupils' skills. Teachers also read to pupils, but this is not always consistent across all classes. This means that some pupils do not develop their love of reading as well as they could.

Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders have put a range of strategies in place to improve attendance since the pandemic. However, these strategies have not yet had a positive impact on the attendance of all pupils.

Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Pupils take care of each other and their environment. Almost all pupils focus well on their learning in class. In early years, children are attentive and engaged in their activities because classroom routines are well established. Children in Reception are taught to describe how they are feeling increasingly well. Pupils with SEND are well supported because leaders ensure that their needs are identified swiftly and appropriate adaptations are put in place. When pupils with SEND struggle to regulate their behaviour, skilled and experienced staff support them effectively.

Governors are committed and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors support and challenge the headteacher well and are mindful of staffs' workload and well-being. Governors undertake their statutory duties effectively.

Staff, including early careers teachers, feel motivated and valued. They love working in the school and speak highly of the support and professional development leaders provide. Parents and carers also greatly value the school. The comment of one parent that 'My child is very fortunate to be part of this wonderful school,' was typical of the views of many parents who submitted comments during the inspection survey.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Recruitment checks for new staff are thorough and timely. Staff and governors receive regular safeguarding training and updates. This means they are knowledgeable and vigilant about potential risks to children.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding information is recorded appropriately. They know pupils and their families very well. Leaders work well with external partners and are tenacious in making sure vulnerable children get the right support quickly. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils talk confidently about how adults in the school help keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always choose high-quality texts to read to pupils. This means that not all pupils develop their love of reading effectively. Leaders should ensure that teachers read sufficiently challenging books to pupils, so that pupils increasingly develop a love of reading.
- Teachers do not use mathematical resources consistently well in all classes. This means that some pupils do not grasp certain abstract concepts as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that mathematical resources are used effectively across all year groups.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough, despite leaders' efforts to reduce persistent absence. These pupils miss vital learning. Leaders should continue to use the most effective strategies to ensure all pupils attend regularly.

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.

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	118635
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10228551
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Townley
Headteacher	Elizabeth Rye
Website	www.st-georges-wrotham.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act

Information about this school

- St George's Church of England Primary School sits within the Diocese of Rochester.
- The headteacher was appointed in 2018.
- The school does not use alternative provision

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this graded 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders including the special educational needs coordinator, teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body.

- The lead inspector talked to representatives from the Diocese of Rochester and Kent local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector heard pupils read aloud to a known adult.
- Inspectors checked a range of policies and documents, including the school's single central record. They also reviewed the school's website and other records regarding the welfare of pupils.
- Inspectors gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour and the school's wider curriculum.
- Inspectors talked to pupils and staff throughout the inspection to gain their views about the school. This included the views of pupils and staff submitted via Ofsted's confidential surveys.
- Inspectors talked with parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of parents submitted via Ofsted's parent survey.

Inspection team

Maria Roberts, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Clive Close

His Majesty's Inspector

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