

# Inspection of St. George's School

Canterbury Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 7RU

---

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 2023

**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 proud to attend St George's. They welcome visitors and are keen to explain their learning. Pupils embody the school rules, 'be ready, be respectful, be safe'. They know how these contribute to their progress and school life. Pupils are kind to each other. They feel safe in school and trust adults to deal with any concerns. Bullying is rare.

Pupils try hard because the school wants them to do their best. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well alongside their peers. Pupils enjoy reading. They like talking about the interesting stories shared in lessons, and they enjoy visiting the school libraries to read quietly and choose new books.

Pupils are taught the principles of good behaviour. They respond well to adults' high expectations. Early years children settle well into school routines. Positive relationships are at the heart of the school community.

Pupils eagerly take on leadership roles, such as prefects or school councillors. Pupils also enjoy and benefit from a range of clubs, including singing, yoga and a range of sports. Carefully thought out trips enrich the curriculum, deepen pupils' learning and contribute well to their wider development.

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

Governors and leaders have very successfully led the amalgamation with the nearby infant school to create an effective primary school. This is a significant accomplishment, which is making a positive difference to pupils' achievement.

The school has established a broad and interesting curriculum. Learning is planned carefully, and new knowledge and skills build securely on what pupils already know. Teachers carefully check what pupils know and provide timely support when there are misunderstandings. Pupils revisit what they have previously learned. This helps them apply knowledge to new situations. However, in a couple of subjects, curriculum plans are being developed, and teachers are not as confident with the content they need to teach.

The school prioritises reading. The new phonics scheme has improved the rate at which pupils gain accuracy and fluency in their reading. Those who need to catch up are well supported. The books pupils read are closely matched to the sounds they know. This helps them quickly become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils with SEND get the help that they need. They are supported to access the curriculum through careful adaptations. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils generally behave well. Staff use consistent language to reinforce the school's high expectations. Consequently, pupils understand the boundaries and how good

behaviour makes a difference to their learning. Any pupils needing extra help to interpret their own moods and feelings receive targeted support. This helps them to avoid getting angry or upset.

Children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start. Staff demonstrate clear expectations about learning and behaviour, and they put systems in place from the very beginning. Children form friendships and play happily together. They enjoy the learning activities that staff provide. Adults ensure that children's talking, listening and explaining are prioritised. As a result, children are well prepared to enter Year 1.

There is an effective programme for personal development. The personal, social and health education curriculum, high-quality story books and themed assemblies combine effectively to ensure pupils' learning helps them to build character and resilience. Pupils are taught to be compassionate and kind. They know that they are 'agents of change' through the shared values at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils understand the importance of respecting individual differences, as well as equality and diversity.

The school leadership team has an accurate understanding of what the school as a whole does well and where it needs to improve. However, some subject leaders are still learning how best to review and develop their subject areas.

Governors know the school well and provide effective challenge and support. This helps the school to continue to improve.

Staff value the support and advice they receive from leaders. They say that leaders give strong consideration to their well-being. The parents who shared their views during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school team.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- A few foundation subjects have recently had curriculum content updated. This means that teachers are not as confident with the new knowledge they need to teach. As a result, pupils do not have the detailed knowledge they need to be successful in all subjects. The school should support teachers to deliver these subjects as intended. The school then needs to check that pupils are acquiring and securing this new knowledge well.
- Some subject leaders are not as knowledgeable as others in how to fulfil their roles. These new leaders have only just begun to understand where the curriculum is working well and where it needs to improve. This means that

teachers do not always receive the support they need to teach the curriculum well. The school should ensure that every subject leader has the support and training they need to evaluate how well the curriculum is working in their subject and to provide high-quality support to teachers.

## **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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114704
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288433
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	632
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	David Chable
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carl Messer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stgeorgesschool.org">www.stgeorgesschool.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	9 and 10 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school currently uses the following registered alternative provision: North East Essex Cooperative Academy.
- The school has nursery provision for three-year-olds.
- The school amalgamated with St George's Infant School and Nursery on 1 January 2021.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, art, and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to adults they knew.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspection team took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and governor minutes. They also considered reports of the school from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experience of the school. They took account of parent, carer and staff views through conversations and responses to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Nick Rudman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nina Kemp	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Shadbolt	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Ayling	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023