



# St Georges Infant School and Nursery

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114705  
**LEA** ESSEX LEA  
**Inspection number** 279436  
**Inspection dates** 17 November 2005 to 18 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Michael Milton LI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Barrington Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		CO2 7RW
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01206578080
<b>Number on roll</b>	199	<b>Fax number</b>	0120646515
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs.Margaret Fisher
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Rosemarie Sadler

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17 November 2005 - 18 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 279436
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St George's Infant School and Nursery is an average-sized school with 208 pupils. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds with an above-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Most pupils come from average social and economic backgrounds. Their standards on entry to the school are broadly average. In 2004, the school was placed on the local authority's register of schools causing concern. The headteacher was absent from February to July 2005 and resigned in August 2005. An acting headteacher was appointed in April 2005 at the same time as a new deputy headteacher. The acting headteacher will leave the school in December 2005 and, from January 2006, the school will be part of a special development project in the local authority. Before April 2005, there were major weaknesses in the school's curriculum and some important statutory requirements were not met.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 4**

The school judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory because of the many important improvements made since last April, which are starting to result in improvements to pupils' progress and achievement. However, the inspectors' judgement is that overall effectiveness is inadequate. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Nursery, but inadequate progress in Reception. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are below average. For the last three years, the results of national tests at the end of Year 2 have been below average and pupils have underachieved. Since April 2005, important improvements have been made to many aspects of the school's work. In making these improvements, the acting headteacher has had the support of the staff. The overall quality of teaching is now satisfactory, and pupils' learning in lessons ranges from satisfactory to good. Nevertheless, because the improvements have been made only in the last term and a half there has been insufficient time to ensure that the pupils make sound or better progress over time. Pupils' progress and standards are improving, but they are limited by the legacy of earlier underachievement and the failure by some teachers to use assessment well. Pupils' behaviour is good and their personal development is satisfactory. Their moral development is a strength but their understanding of other cultures is a weakness. The school has made insufficient progress since the last inspection because a start was not made on addressing the issues for action until April 2005 when a frank and accurate self-evaluation identified what needed to be done. The large proportion of parents who returned questionnaires are delighted with the changes since last April and are very pleased with the school. The school has improved significantly in a short time and, because of this, provides satisfactory value for money, even though achievement and standards are still inadequate. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory and has been strengthened by the good leadership of the acting headteacher. The governing body's effectiveness is improving but is inadequate because it does not have a strategic plan and does not work well as a critical friend of the school. In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement and standards and the role of the governing body in monitoring and improving the school's work.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve pupils' achievement and standards by using assessment more effectively to ensure lessons are challenging for all pupils
- devise and implement a long-term strategic plan to continue the school's improvement
- improve the effectiveness of the governing body by developing its role in monitoring and challenging the school's work in its priorities
- develop the pupils' understanding of the variety and richness of cultures in Britain.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

After making satisfactory progress in the Nursery, the pupils underachieve in the Reception year, largely because of weaknesses in the use made of assessment information. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are below average, especially in reading and writing. In the recent past, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have also underachieved and the results of national tests at the end of the key stage have been below average. Standards at Key Stage 1 have started to rise because of the better quality of teaching but are not as high as they should be. Pupils are beginning to make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress but improvements in attainment are hindered by a legacy of underachievement from before April 2005, when the quality of the curriculum was poor and there were weaknesses in assessment. Pupils with learning difficulties are making satisfactory progress because of the effective additional support that they receive. The school has not yet analysed the progress of different groups of pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Attendance has improved significantly and is similar to the national figures. Almost all pupils now arrive punctually. Pupils like coming to school, feel safe there and trust the adults who work with them. Behaviour is good and attitudes are mostly positive. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and well-developed social skills. Improvements to the teaching of religious education (RE) are making a positive contribution to their spiritual development. While pupils learn about culture through subjects such as art, music and English, their understanding of other cultures is unsatisfactory. The school has started to provide opportunities for pupils to influence the school's work. A school council has recently been formed with a view to introducing pupils to skills needed in later life. Pupils are taught how to be safe and healthy but their learning of basic skills in literacy and numeracy has, until recently, been inadequate.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A common strength of teaching is that classes are well managed and good relationships help pupils develop positive attitudes to work. The best teaching and learning is in Year 2. In the best lessons, there is clear, interactive whole-class teaching that has a brisk pace so that pupils have sufficient time for working in groups. The challenging tasks are based on assessment and well matched to the pupils' learning needs. Learning objectives are clear and used to help pupils to assess their own learning at the ends of lessons.

However, these objectives are rarely referred to during lessons. The progress of individuals and groups is monitored well and effective support provided as necessary. Where lessons are less effective, some activities do not help pupils to learn as much as they could, assessment is not used to plan the next steps of learning, the more able are given work that is too easy for them and the concluding parts of lessons do not add to pupils' learning. The work of teaching assistants is usually effective in helping pupils to learn in all parts of lessons but this good practice is not found in all lessons.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Since April 2005, the National Curriculum and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced so that all subjects, including RE, now meet statutory requirements and the teaching of basic skills has improved. The work pupils are given is now satisfactory, although there are insufficient additional visits and visitors to the school to help bring learning alive and make it more enjoyable. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are provided for well. The school includes these pupils fully in all aspects of its life and plans effectively to meet their individual needs. There is now a range of clubs and activities for pupils, but these have been suspended until later this term to take account of other priorities. Personal, social, health and citizenship education helps to ensure pupils understand the importance of staying safe and being healthy, and prepares them for making their contribution to the community.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Since April 2005, effective systems for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils have been introduced. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are very clear, up to date and are well understood by staff. Good support is provided for vulnerable pupils to ensure that their specific needs are met. Parents are kept well informed about their children's learning. The school is now liaising with other agencies and seeks advice whenever necessary. The school has satisfactory systems in place to track how well pupils are performing, although systems to inform pupils about how well they are doing and how they can improve are not as effective as they should be. Teachers' marking, whilst consistently positive, currently gives pupils little idea of how to improve their work and rarely refers to learning objectives or targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The acting headteacher provides very effective leadership and has brought about rapid and fundamental improvement in a short space of time based on termly action plans. She has strengthened the school's capacity for improvement which is now satisfactory. The headteacher has secured the commitment of many staff to active involvement in rapid school improvement. The subject leaders for English, mathematics and ICT have

quickly developed their roles, and have taken and plan to take, many actions to improve teaching, the curriculum and pupils' achievement. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory because there is insufficient focus on improvement and inadequate links between the Nursery and Reception classes. The school monitors and evaluates the different aspects of its work effectively. Since last April, the school has made a good start to involving pupils, parents and the local authority in these evaluations. The resulting information has been used to inform the many improvements made in the last term and a half, although they have not yet had enough time to have their full impact on improving teaching and learning. The school is now led and managed in a way that enables the governing body to begin to carry out its responsibilities effectively. The governing body is committed to the improvement of the school and its own effectiveness but is not yet effective in strategic planning and acting as a critical friend.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	4	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	NA
Learners are educated about sexual health	NA
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	NA
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	NA
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us into your school last week. It was a pleasure to talk to some of you in lessons, in the playground and at lunchtime. We watched all of you working and playing. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found out. You enjoy school a great deal. We saw how much you enjoy playtimes with the new toys and play equipment. Mrs Sadler and the staff have made many improvements to the school since last April when Mrs Sadler became the acting headteacher. Your parents and carers are very pleased with these changes which are helping you to learn more. Two of the many changes are new ways of teaching you handwriting and mathematics. These changes have not been put into action for long enough to help you improve your work as much as you can. So you need more time with the better ways of learning writing and mathematics before your writing and number work are as good as they can be. Your teachers are keen to help you learn more than you do now. Mrs Sadler knows what needs to be done in future to make the school even better, and we agree with her. The main things to do are to: - improve your knowledge and skills further by ensuring that all of you are challenged in lessons - have a plan for two or three years that shows how the school will improve each term - help you learn more about the lives of people from different cultures in our country - make sure that the school's governing body helps plan for the school's improvement and checks on how well you are all doing. You can help with these improvements by continuing to behave well and work hard.