

St George's Church of England Primary School, Chorley

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119466
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291429
Inspection dates	13–14 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Reverend Kenneth Barrett
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Ainsworth
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2002
School address	Carr Lane Chorley Lancashire PR7 3JU
Telephone number	01257 262323
Fax number	01257 231822

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St George's is a popular school and is regularly oversubscribed. It is of average size and almost all of the pupils are White British. Most parents are in employment and the number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Children in the Reception year and in Key Stage 1 are taught in mixed age classes. The school was recognised by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector as a successful school in 2003 and gained The Investors in People Award in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Georges is a good school that takes excellent care of its pupils. One parent described it as, 'An exceptional school where children blossom with the care they receive.' The calm and ordered atmosphere, based on the school's strong Christian tradition, makes a very good contribution to pupils' outstanding behaviour and personal development.

Pupils are happy and enjoy school and this is evident in the good attendance and their enthusiastic involvement in all the school has to offer. They feel safe and secure and are confident to approach any adult in school should they have a problem. The school's excellent links with other organisations in a Sports Partnership is extending the opportunities for pupils to participate in an extensive range of physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. The above average standards in basic skills and opportunities to take responsibility in school prepare pupils very well for the future.

The school is led and managed well. Its self-evaluation is accurate in many respects, but was too modest in judging the excellent level of care provided and the pupils' outstanding behaviour and personal development. The school's actions to remedy an identified, relative weakness in writing are beginning to raise standards throughout the school.

Teaching is good and pupils learn well. Children start school in the Reception year with skills that are above average for their age. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good so children make good progress, achieve well, and attain, and often exceed, the goals set for their learning. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve well. Standards in Key Stage 1 have been consistently above, and sometimes well above, average over the last five years. In the 2006 national tests for pupils in Year 6, the school's results were above average. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 was well above average in science and just above average in English. It was below average in mathematics and some higher attaining pupils did not achieve as well as they could. This is because in some lessons the more able pupils do not start the more demanding tasks quickly enough. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and resources are well deployed to ensure they have every support to help them to achieve well.

The curriculum is good and is enriched by a good range of additional sporting and musical activities. Very good links with local high schools enrich pupils' experiences through sharing facilities and expertise. There are particularly good links for science and music technology which has helped to improve standards in these subjects. The good improvement in standards and in technology resources since the last inspection indicates the school has a good capacity to improve further. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5, particularly in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. Children enter the Reception year with skills that are above average for their age. Pupils make good progress in their time in school because of good teaching and the high level of care, guidance and support they experience. Children achieve well in the Reception year and the majority achieve or exceed the nationally

recommended goals by the time they move to Year 1. Pupils also achieve well in Key Stage 1 and standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above, and sometimes well above, average for the last five years.

In the 2006 national tests for 11-year-olds, a much higher proportion than average attained the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics; all pupils did so in science. The proportion reaching the higher Level 5 in science was well above average. It was just above average in English, but below average in mathematics. This is because work in lessons is not always sufficiently demanding to challenge the more able pupils, some of whom did not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because their needs are identified at an early stage and they receive a very good level of support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is a happy school where pupils feel safe and secure. They say they enjoy school because 'It has happy pupils and helpful teachers' and this is evident in the excellent relationships at all levels. Christian values permeate the work of the school, which results in pupils caring and taking responsibility for each other's welfare. They actively try to keep themselves healthy and most pupils take part in extra sport in their own time. Year 6 pupils feel their teachers prepare them well for moving on to high school by giving them more independence and responsibility. Pupils are confident, articulate speakers, good listeners and have very good manners. All year groups contribute very well to their school community through caring for each other and joining in activities. Older pupils look after younger ones at playtimes. Year 6 prefects take on a range of duties, which they carry out quietly and effectively. Their supervision of pupils filing into and out of assemblies is particularly impressive. The school council includes representatives from Year 2 upwards so pupils feel their views are heard and are pleased to see their suggestions being implemented. Pupils work and play hard, and are extremely keen to do well. Their behaviour, both in class and around the school, is exemplary. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their development are all outstanding as a result of excellent assemblies and the promotion of friendship and kindness in all aspects of school life. Pupils are proud of their support for the church and many charities both local and overseas. Their above average skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology prepare them very well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. In most lessons there is lively delivery by the teacher and a good pace to maintain pupils' interest. Lessons are well planned with tasks matched to most pupils' needs. Teachers have high expectations for their classes as a whole and, as a result, the vast majority of pupils reach or exceed the expected levels for their age. In a small minority lessons, whole class teaching goes on for too long and higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged, particularly in mathematics. Pupils are well motivated and concentrate extremely well. Teachers work hard to build up their pupils' confidence and so they develop a good attitude to learning. Marking is used well in all subjects and is particularly effective in English in highlighting strengths and identifying areas for improvement. This helps pupils to make good

progress. In all lessons, teachers and their assistants work well together to give lower attainers the support they need. As a result, they make as much progress as their peers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is well balanced and meets all statutory requirements. Facilities have improved since the last inspection and the new technology area gives all Key Stage 2 pupils good access to practical activities and computer resources. It also enables good opportunities to be provided for small group and independent study. In science, there is a good emphasis on experimenting and investigating and this has contributed well to the good standards achieved. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education which is enriched, for example, by the life education unit which delivers drugs education, and by outside speakers, such as the parent who talks to the pupils about being a Muslim. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including many different sports, which contribute to pupils' enjoyment and well-being. All pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to develop independence and team skills through an outdoor activities residential experience. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and the school is currently extending the use of the outdoor area to improve learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's care, guidance and support are outstanding. Health and safety procedures are rigorous and conform to local authority guidance. Child protection procedures are robust. This is an extremely caring school where every child is regarded as special. The school provides excellent support for pupils with learning difficulties and other vulnerable pupils. As a result, these pupils feel valued and happy, and they make good progress. All pupils have individual and group targets and feel confident that they are very well supported in their work. Their progress is carefully monitored and intervention strategies are effective in ensuring the vast majority of pupils reach the expected standards for their age. Teachers know their pupils very well and carefully guide and support them so that they make outstanding progress in their personal development. Parents are very happy with the care and guidance their children receive and say that their children feel safe and happy at school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher is well respected in the community and one parent described her leadership as 'an incredible asset'. Excellent relationships, guided by Christian principles which hold that 'Each child is accepted and valued as unique', have resulted in the exceptional level of care for individual pupils and their outstanding personal development.

The leadership team's clear emphasis on raising standards has led to a good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in science. The analysis of the 2006 national tests identified a relative weakness in writing when compared to the results in reading. Inspection evidence indicates that the school's subsequent action to improve writing is having a positive impact.

The school has developed good systems for tracking pupils' progress. These are used well to identify pupils who need additional support and they achieve well. The early identification of

more able pupils who are not making sufficient progress is not so well established and a few do not achieve as well as they could.

Governance is good. Governors have a range of expertise that they use well, for example to maintain prudent financial planning and to carry out good risk assessments.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

St George's Church of England Primary School, Chorley

Carr Lane

Chorley

Lancashire

PR7 3JU

16 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making Mrs Byrom and me so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We agree with you that St George's is a good school and, in fact, some things about it are outstanding. We think the care you receive from all the adults is exceptional and we know that this helps to make you feel happy and safe.

We congratulate you on the fact that other excellent features about your school include your exemplary behaviour and your attitudes to work. You take your responsibilities in voting or as members of the school council, and as prefects, very seriously and you are playing a very important part in school life. This will prepare you well for the high school and later life.

As you are taught well and work hard you reach a good standard in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave school. To make things even better we have asked the school to make sure that the faster learners start more difficult tasks sooner in the lesson. This is so that more of you in Year 6 can achieve Level 5, particularly in mathematics.

Good luck to you all; we enjoyed our time with you immensely.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Shirley Herring

Lead Inspector