



# St George's Infant School and Nursery

Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 114705  
**Local Authority** ESSEX  
**Inspection number** 294563  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Barrington Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Colchester
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		Essex CO2 7RW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 578080
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	213	<b>Fax number</b>	01206 546515
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jacqui Moore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 November 2005		

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<b>Age group</b> 3–7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7–8 February 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 294563
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The area of Colchester served by the school consists of a mixture of private and social housing. Pupils come from a broad range of backgrounds though the proportion receiving a free school meal is broadly average. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is noticeably below average, and it is especially low in literacy and language. Many pupils also begin school with underdeveloped social skills. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. About 12 per cent are from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds. A small proportion, less than five per cent, speak English as an additional language. About a fifth of pupils have learning difficulties and this is a little above the national average. Only one pupil currently has a statement of special educational needs. There has been a high turnover of staff since the last inspection.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. It has made good progress in addressing the issues from the last inspection and is in a good position to improve further. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good and pupils get a successful start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. Achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because their needs are clearly identified and they are well supported in lessons. Standards, though improving, are currently below average because pupils began the year with very low levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. This was a result of significant turbulence in staffing the previous year. Stable staffing is now helping pupils to make up for lost ground, though the school has rightly identified that continuing to improve standards is a key priority. Progress and achievement in the Foundation Stage are good due to good quality teaching. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and there are some good features as well as areas for development. In particular, tasks are not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and well-being are satisfactory. Behaviour and attendance are satisfactory. Pupils now develop a sound understanding of other cultures, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. They show good enjoyment of learning and participate actively in the school and wider community. The school looks after its pupils well enabling them to feel safe and secure. Pupils know how to stay fit and healthy and are satisfactorily prepared for the next step in education. Overall, care, guidance and support are satisfactory.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall but good in the Foundation Stage. Planning for teaching literacy and numeracy is well developed though there are missed opportunities for practising writing in subjects across the curriculum. The limited computer resources are well used to support learning so that pupils develop their skills at a reasonably good rate. Assessment systems are well in place and pupils' progress is very effectively tracked and monitored. However, pupils do not always know the next steps in their learning or how to improve their work as targets are written in language that is too difficult for them to understand.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Coordinators, many of whom are new in post, are making good progress in establishing their roles. The headteacher's good leadership has enabled her to quickly establish a unified team whose members are well focused on the school's key priorities. Staff are well aware of the areas for development as a result of thorough and accurate self-evaluation. Challenging targets are set which the school is mostly meeting. It has made good use of local authority support to establish effective monitoring systems and, hence, promote improvement. Governors now provide satisfactory oversight of the school's work. Given the improvements in standards and quality in the Foundation Stage and the effectiveness with which the issues from the last inspection have been addressed, the school's overall capacity to improve is good. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

## What the school should do to improve further

- In order to raise standards further in literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 1, ensure that work in all lessons is provided at the right level for different groups of pupils.
- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise writing in subjects across the curriculum.
- Write targets in language that pupils find easy to understand.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

In the 2006 national assessments, results were broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. This represented good progress considering pupils' starting points. However, current achievement in relation to pupils' overall capabilities is satisfactory because pupils made slower progress last year due to staffing difficulties. They began the year with fairly low standards. Pupils are now beginning to catch up and many have made good progress this academic year in literacy and numeracy as a result of additional support and the challenging targets set for them. Standards, however, remain below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils make good progress in speaking and listening where their attainment is broadly typical for their age. There has been good improvement in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection and pupils are on track to meet national expectations. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress against their individual targets and in mathematics and overall, their achievement is good. Beginners in English learn to speak it at a rapid rate because teaching assistants support them well in lessons and the generally positive ethos in the school encourages them to practise speaking. Their overall achievement is similar to that of others in the school.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy coming to school and appreciate the help and support they receive from adults. As a result of satisfactory opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, pupils respect the views, values and beliefs of others. They develop a sound understanding of their own and other cultures. Most pupils behave well but a small minority sometimes have difficulty in maintaining their self-control. The school council helps pupils to make positive contributions to their school and their suggestions, such as what type of playground equipment should be bought, are taken seriously. Pupils are knowledgeable about the need to eat healthy foods and to take regular exercise. They help other people less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for charities. Although absence rates remain above the national average, the school has a robust range of effective strategies to improve attendance and punctuality.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Planning is thorough and detailed and clear learning objectives are identified at the starts of lessons. Teachers set out clearly in introductions what they want pupils to do. In the Foundation Stage there is a good focus on use of vocabulary and developing children's language skills. Activities are well matched to their needs and interests. In Key Stage 1, tasks do not always provide the right level of challenge for different groups of pupils. Sometimes the work is a bit too difficult for some pupils; at other times it is a little too easy.

Teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language well. Teachers make active use of technological aids in lessons and encourage pupils to make good use of the interactive white boards.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school's increased emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is well founded on pupils' needs. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities for writing across a wide range of subjects. Good progress has been made in providing a broad curriculum and the school plans to develop this further by making more relevant links between subjects. There is a satisfactory personal, social and health education programme which helps pupils develop confidence as learners and extend their knowledge on aspects such as healthy eating. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Planning is very well linked to assessment. The school makes creative use of suitable locations in and out of school to provide adequate outdoor activities for Reception children whilst waiting for the designated outdoor area to be properly developed. There is sound provision for pupils who have English as an additional language and good provision for pupils with learning difficulties. The school makes satisfactory provision for after-school clubs and visits to enrich pupils' learning. Sound provision for basic skills prepares pupils satisfactorily for their future lives.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective in this inclusive school. Risk assessments are thorough with staff aware of their responsibility to ensure high levels of health and safety. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, are well looked after and cared for. They know that all adults will help them. Pupils and staff get on well. Staff make helpful comments to pupils in lessons and when marking their books. Assessment is rigorous. Pupils understand that they have targets to help them but do not often understand what these mean because they are not written in language that

pupils can easily understand. Links with outside agencies are satisfactory overall and the school has sound links with the local junior school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher provides effective leadership which has helped the school move forward at a good pace despite staffing difficulties and a fire, which seriously disrupted work over the previous academic year. Good management systems are in place to support the work of staff and ensure a consistent approach to, for example, assessment. Systems for monitoring and tracking performance are rigorous and consistently employed, hence, enabling the school to identify any underperformance by pupils quickly. Governors now have satisfactory involvement in the work of the school. The leadership of coordinators is satisfactory; many are new to their roles. They are making good progress in developing monitoring of their areas of work and promoting standards and achievement. The headteacher, with the assistance of local authority personnel, has been effective in monitoring the school's progress and the quality of its work. As a result, she has a very clear understanding of how well the school is doing and the right priorities are being well tackled to help further improvement. Good use is made of resources and the school provides satisfactory value for money. Links with parents are well developed and parents feel positive about the school.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

12 February 2007

Dear Children,

St George's Infant School and Nursery, Barrington Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 7RW

We enjoyed visiting your school very much and most of all we liked visiting your classrooms and talking to you. We would like to thank you very much for making us feel welcome.

The school is providing you with a sound education. We saw a number of things that were good including ways in which you help to make the school a better place:

- you enjoy school and like learning
- you are good at speaking and listening
- children in the Nursery and Reception classes get a good start to their education
- staff take good care of you
- your headteacher leads the school well and knows exactly how to make it better.

There are some things that could be better. These include:

- making sure that the work you get in lessons helps you to do better in literacy and numeracy
- having enough opportunities to practise writing in other subjects
- making sure that your targets are written in a way that makes it easier for you to understand them.

You can certainly help to improve the school by continuing to work hard and following your teachers' advice when they tell you what you need to do to improve your work.

We wish you all well in the future.

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead inspector