

St George The Martyr Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100040
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	307282
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Enid Korn

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	195
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Guy Pope
Headteacher	Ms Amanda Szewczyk-Radley
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	John's Mews London WC1N 2NX
Telephone number	0207 405 5640
Fax number	020 7430 0816

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a medium sized Church of England voluntary aided school in the centre of London. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups and around half are Bangladeshi. Eighty per cent of the pupils have English as an additional language. There are above average proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and high proportions in the older classes. These are predominantly for speech, language and communication and moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The mobility of pupils is above the average, in part due to the proximity of the school to colleges for overseas students and to Great Ormond Street hospital. The school had a complete rebuild two years ago. The school has gained Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools Status, Active Mark, Young Business Enterprise Award, Camden in Bloom Best School Grounds, Exceptional People in Camden, Design Week Awards, Dand;AD Awards and Order of Saint Mellitus (awarded to the headteacher).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St George the Martyr is a good school where pupils' enjoyment and achievement are at the heart of its work. The school provides a good quality of education with high standards of care. Pupils are very happy and enjoy their schooling due to the excellent relationships throughout the school and the interesting experiences within the planned curriculum. Pupils say 'School is fun. You can make new friends and meet new people.' These positive attitudes are reflected in good attendance and outstanding behaviour and contribute to pupils' good achievement. The headteacher and governors provide outstanding leadership. Parents express high levels of satisfaction, 'The school has improved year on year to provide a good education and environment for children.' The school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion.

Standards were very low, particularly in English, immediately following the previous inspection in 2004. The headteacher determinedly addressed this situation and reviewed the provision. Self-evaluation is very good and all staff share the very clear vision for improvement. The middle managers, known as 'leaders of learning', have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject areas. This has led to standards in English and mathematics rising to around national averages by the end of Year 6. The headteacher recognises that standards in science now need to be raised.

Pupils' personal development is excellent. By Year 6, pupils are confident and they express themselves clearly in spoken and written English. Pupils say they feel confident and secure in school. They follow the school's messages on healthy eating and taking regular exercise. Their knowledge of how to stay safe is good, particularly in relation to drugs, medicines and road safety. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school through the school council. 'We listen to them and they listen to us and that is how things get done' such as raising money for football nets through sales of goods. Pupils have extremely good social skills and a good understanding of the value of money; they are very well prepared for their future economic well-being. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding.

Good teaching and a curriculum well adapted to pupils' interests and needs ensures that all groups of pupils achieve well, including those with English as an additional language. There is good provision for pupils working below age expected standards. As standards rise, the teaching skills and curriculum planning for more able learners could be further developed. Assessment information is used rigorously to inform teaching and to monitor individual pupils' progress. In order to raise standards further, the 'leaders of learning' in the school are currently improving their systems for evaluating progress year on year and monitoring trends in relation to the achievement of the various pupil groups.

Improvement since the last inspection is good with an appropriate focus upon raising standards in English and mathematics. The resulting acceleration in the pupils' progress shows that the school has a good capacity for further improvement. Due to the need to address standards in English and mathematics after the last inspection, improvement points in relation to science were given less priority. The development of science is a focus in the current school improvement plan and some of the planned actions have started to be implemented.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the nursery with abilities well below those expected for their age. Many have no spoken English. Children make extremely good progress so that by the time that they leave Reception over a third are reaching expected standards in all areas of the curriculum. Almost all children achieve exceptionally well in their social development and in their mastery of spoken English. Their rapid progress is brought about by skilful teaching in small groups. Adults give them individual attention and constantly engage them in conversation to develop their knowledge of English. Children receive constant stimulation through a wide range of exciting activities. Adults treat each child with respect, giving them time and praise to develop their confidence and their learning. Therefore children make rapid progress. Phonics and numeracy are taught daily. Children become familiar with traditional children's literature through enacting the story and dressing as the characters. Older children can recite the text from memory, sequence the events and write captions in books.

Parents speak extremely highly of the provision and of the home visits that establish good relations between home and school. The newly appointed leader ensures that the unit runs extremely efficiently with a key worker system that helps children to feel secure so that they flourish. The small outdoor areas are used effectively as learning environments. There is the right balance between teacher directed and child initiated activities and both are used extremely effectively to extend the children's language, confidence and thinking. Routines are outstandingly well taught so that children become independent and confident and work with others. All staff work together as a very effective team sharing their detailed assessments of children's learning to plan the next step.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision in order to raise standards in science.
- Extend the role of the 'leaders of learning' so that monitoring of pupils' progress takes more account of prior attainment and trends over time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well from their low starting points. There has been sustained improvement in standards in English and mathematics over the last four years throughout the school. Pupils from the various ethnic groups including those with English as an additional language all make similarly good progress. The school's assessments show an acceleration in the rate of progress over the last two years, primarily due to the many 'catch up' programmes introduced. There has been particularly good progress in reading, due to the many opportunities that pupils have to read individually with an adult. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and at times outstanding progress. Those with moderate learning difficulties and with speech and language difficulties make good progress. All have benefited greatly from the small group teaching and the special teaching programmes they now receive. At the end of Year 2 standards are broadly average. Standards are currently around the national average in English and mathematics by Year 6 despite a third of pupils needing extra support. Standards in science remain just below those found nationally.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

In this multi-cultural school, relationships are outstanding and pupils show respect and consideration for the views and feelings of others. The headteacher takes full advantage of the locality in order to extend the pupils' horizons. For example, the clerk to the select committees of the House of Commons regularly opens the elections and trains the school council. Pupils have made presentations to Members of Parliament and local leaders of banks and enterprise councils on cost saving practices. As a result, pupils' confidence, social skills, financial awareness and knowledge of citizenship are outstanding. Pupils collect for charities. School assemblies and visits to local places of interest contribute to the pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, introducing them to their own cultural heritage and to that of others. Pupils' knowledge of safe practices is good and they make very healthy lifestyle choices, informed by the school's teaching and regular police training in road safety and staying safe on the streets.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Relationships between teachers and their pupils are extremely good. Lessons are planned to promote pupils' enjoyment and interest and to support learning. Staff are very skilled at supporting the pupils who are new to learning English, frequently using computer technology. Work is well-matched to pupils needs and they all receive additional adult support when needed. Tasks provided for high ability pupils are suitably challenging. Further opportunities to develop independence could be explored. The learning intentions of the lessons are explained clearly and rewards and praise are used effectively. Therefore, pupils are extremely well motivated, settle very quickly to their tasks and behave extremely well, leading to their good progress. Through their good questioning skills and asking pupils to reflect upon their learning, teachers monitor their pupils' progress well. Targets are used well in English and mathematics to improve the pace of learning, but less so in science. Marking is good, an improvement since the last inspection.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned to promote enjoyment of learning with good links between subjects. Provision for information and communication technology is very good and is used well to support learning in other subjects. There is an appropriately strong focus on reading, writing and mathematical skills with a good number of intervention programmes in order to raise standards. In science, opportunities for practical, independent activities are limited. The curriculum promotes the personal development and well-being of the pupils very well. The wide range of enrichment experiences including visits and visitors are excellent, taking full advantage of the locality and the local communities. There are opportunities for pupils to perform through music, dance and drama and the lunchtime and after-school clubs are wide ranging, covering many different sporting activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Robust systems for ensuring the school is safe and secure ensure that pupils work and play in a safe environment. The new building is bright, clean and well adapted for those with disabilities. There are very high levels of care and the systems in place ensure that pupils are safeguarded and protected. The school has very good induction procedures for pupils joining the school mid-way through a key-stage. Incidents of bullying are dealt with robustly. Outstanding care is provided for the more vulnerable pupils and for when they transfer to secondary school. Pupils say they are well looked after. A healthy lifestyle is strongly promoted. The learning mentor provides very effectively for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress in lessons is rigorous. Pupils and parents are involved in setting targets and pupils are all aware of their individual targets and relate to them enthusiastically.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership team have worked purposefully to bring about improvements since the last inspection in many aspects of the school's work. The headteacher has ensured that all staff are well trained for their roles, including pastoral support. The headteacher and the leaders of learning systematically monitor aspects of teaching and learning, and use this information very effectively to improve the school's practices. Leaders of learning rigorously monitor the pupils' progress in classes, and have begun to monitor progression through the school but this is not as yet fully established. The governors are very capable and make well informed decisions. They know the school well and work steadfastly to improve pupils' opportunities. They review the learning targets to ensure that they are challenging. The governors have facilitated a high quality rebuild of the accommodation. The large majority of parents are extremely pleased with the school, the progress their children make and the communication they receive. However, the school is aware that a small number would value more liaison and are working to achieve this.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

03 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George The Martyr Church of England Primary School, London, WC1N 2NX

The inspectors were very pleased to visit your school. We found that it provides you with a good education.

Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We really enjoyed talking to you and visiting your lessons during the two days. You all work hard with your teachers and you enjoy your school. As promised, I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school.

We were impressed by your very good behaviour and how well you work with each other. We think that your school looks after you very well and that it is very well led and managed. Your teachers make the lessons interesting for you and they ask you some good questions. We were very impressed by the way that you and your school council work for the good of the school and how keen you are to save money by economising on the use of electricity.

We have asked your teachers to improve your achievements in science and to watch your progress carefully as you move up the school.

You can all help your teachers by continuing to work hard.

Well done, and I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely,

Enid Korn

Lead Inspector