

St George's Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102234
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	307942
Inspection dates	6–7 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Olson Davis

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	432
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	60
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Murphy
Headteacher	Mr Pat Morrissey
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	29 November 2007
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sudbury Hill Harrow HA1 3SB
Telephone number	020 8422 1272
Fax number	020 8864 5540

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school situated in Harrow serves a diverse community and takes pupils from three neighbouring local authorities. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is not their home language are higher than in the majority of schools. However, the number of pupils at the early stages of learning English is small. The largest minority ethnic groups are of Irish and other White heritage, and Asian, Black Caribbean or Black African backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The range of needs include pupils with specific or severe learning difficulties, or who have behavioural difficulties, as well as some pupils with autism. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision (EYFS) for pupils in the Reception classes. There is a breakfast club, an after-school club and a Nursery, all of which are managed by the school's governing body.

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's School has a strong community spirit where the children experience a true sense of belonging. Academically they are encouraged and simulated without being pressured. In my opinion St George's School definitely promotes the 'Every Child Matters' policy.' This comment from one parent reflects the positive views of the majority of parents. The school provides a good standard of education. Under the experienced and highly committed leadership of the headteacher, the school works hard to give pupils a well-rounded education and ensures that they make good progress in their learning. Central to the school's success is the very effective partnership between the headteacher and deputy headteacher that provides a clear direction to the work of the school. Consequently, there is a strong sense of shared purpose among staff and a clear resolve to do their best for their pupils.

As a result of the school's very caring ethos and strong support for pupils, their personal development is outstanding. The school has worked effectively to ensure that the variety of cultures represented in the school are valued and celebrated, and this strongly supports pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and contributes towards good racial harmony and community cohesion.

Pupils achieve well from broadly average starting points to attain above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is the result of good teaching and strong provision for vulnerable pupils. Standards in science and mathematics, though above average, are not as high as in English. Assessments show that fewer pupils reach the highest level 5 at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science compared with English. Although teachers provide interesting work for pupils that is well matched to their abilities, they sometimes miss opportunities to add extra challenge to pupils' work in mathematics. There is also scope to improve opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out investigations in science in order to raise standards even further in this subject.

Pupils greatly enjoy learning because the school takes great care to include them in all aspects of school life. For example, some pupils were involved in working with adults to revise the school's mission statement. The school has excellent partnerships with parents, outside agencies and local schools to the great benefit of pupils. The good curriculum effectively meets the needs of pupils who find learning difficult and of pupils for whom English is not their first language. There are excellent enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities within the curriculum and in the after school clubs which adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Recent developments in the roles and responsibilities of staff have brought greater rigour to monitoring and the use of assessment information. Several initiatives, such as strengthening the procedures for tracking pupils' progress and providing more opportunities for them to use their reading and writing skills in real contexts, have resulted in higher standards. The quality of leadership and management at all levels is good and the school is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the EYFS. They come from a variety of pre-school settings and a few come from the St. George's Dragons Early Years Centre that is housed in the school and run by its governing body. The quality of early years provision at this setting is good overall.

The majority of children enter the school's Reception classes with abilities and skills expected for their age. They settle quickly under the good care and guidance of the staff and make excellent gains in their personal and social development. Children make good progress in all other areas of learning because of good teaching and support and well-planned activities within a stimulating environment. As a result, the large majority of children attain the goals expected for children when they enter Year 1.

The EYFS leader provides good leadership ensuring that staff work well together as a team. They give high priority to children's welfare and robust arrangements are in place for their safeguarding. EYFS children start attending the after school club in the autumn term when they attend full-time school. There are currently seven children on the register. The club provides well for these children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide greater challenge for more able pupils in mathematics.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out investigations in science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Children make good progress in the Reception classes. The progress they make by the end of Year 2 is also good and continues in Years 3 to 6. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6, although there is some variation in how well pupils do in different subjects. In recent years, standards in English and mathematics have been above average whilst standards in science have been broadly average. In the recent Year 6 assessments, pupils attained well above average results in English but results in mathematics dipped. Despite almost all pupils reaching the expected level 4, results in mathematics and science were lower than in English because smaller proportions of pupils reached the highest level 5 in these subjects. School data shows that attainment levels in the current Year 6 are higher than last year's results and both boys and girls make good progress. Those pupils who find learning difficult receive a high level of well-targeted support and, as a result, make good progress. Minority ethnic pupils make similarly good progress to their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Relationships are excellent. As a result, pupils' behaviour is outstanding and this contributes very well to the harmonious conditions in the classrooms and ensures that pupils learn effectively. Pupils' rejoice in other pupils' successes as shown in the high level of enjoyment during in the achievement assembly. The school's Healthy School status helps pupils to develop an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and the benefits of exercise. Pupils appreciate the 'delicious hot meals' prepared at the school and their lunchboxes show that they make healthy choices. Members of the school council are proud to see the many changes they have suggested, such as additional outdoor play equipment, taken up by the school. Pupils show a strong sense of social awareness by raising funds for charity and in their very positive attitudes to improving the environment. Attendance is good and punctuality has improved well since the last inspection. Pupils' good basic skills and their very well developed personal and social skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils feel involved in their learning because teachers give them a clear idea of what they are expected to learn and achieve by the end of lessons. Teachers make good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards to illustrate their clear explanations and to provide interest to pupils' learning. They provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work, which clarifies their thinking and develops their skills of working together. Pupils present their work neatly and teachers' marking clearly shows pupils how to improve their work. Staff have high expectations and plan work that matches pupils' individual needs and capabilities well. As a result, pupils make good progress. However, teachers' questioning and some tasks in mathematics lessons are not sufficiently challenging for some more able pupils. Skilled teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide good quality help for pupils with learning difficulties and for pupils at the early stages of learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from a varied and stimulating curriculum that is monitored closely to ensure that it meets their needs, particularly those who find learning difficult. The curriculum supports pupils' personal development very well. Pupils learn about healthy living and how to keep safe through the effective personal, social and health education programme. Teachers make creative links between subjects to make learning interesting for pupils and to ensure that literacy skills are successfully reinforced. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' work in other areas. A stronger emphasis has been placed on pupils using and applying their mathematics skills to solve problems. However, there are some missed opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out their own investigations in science. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in art, drama, music, Spanish and physical education, which leads to their quick acquisition of skills. There is high participation in the extensive range of extra-curricular activities. These develop pupils' physical, personal and social skills and add greatly to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's strong caring ethos means that pupils feel valued and grow in confidence. Pupils feel safe in school because there are good strategies for dealing with any rare instances of inappropriate behaviour. Procedures for ensuring the protection, safety and well-being of pupils are robust. The breakfast club provides a high standard of care. It provides a nutritious start to the day for some pupils along with excellent sporting activities and good opportunities to improve their use of ICT. Teachers make good use of assessment information to identify, track and support pupils' learning needs and to set challenging targets. However, this process is not yet sharp enough to ensure that all those pupils capable of reaching the highest level 5 by the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science actually do so.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

School self-evaluation is good although the school has over-estimated some aspects of its performance. The school's development plan shows that school leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to bring about improvements. Strengths from the last inspection have been maintained and most issues tackled successfully. Recent initiatives to improve pupils' reading and writing skills have proved particularly successful in raising achievement in English. The well-organised provision for pupils with learning difficulties means that these pupils achieve well. Professional development has focused on helping subject leaders to play their full part in improving standards and providing good support for staff. As a result, subject leaders have strengthened provision where needed but know there is more to be done to ensure that even more pupils attain higher standards in mathematics and science. Governors know the school well and this allows them to participate fully in managing its strategic development. They promote the school well within the community by their careful management of the extended care provision.

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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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/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	1
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	2

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?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

19 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Primary School, Harrow, HA1 3SB

Thank you for all your help when my colleagues and I visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and took careful note of what you and your parents had to say about the school. We were very impressed by your politeness and friendliness.

Your school gives you a good standard of education. There is an outstanding aspect too, namely your personal development. Here are a few of the many good things about your school.

- The work in the Early Years Foundation Stage is well organised and gives the youngest children a good start.
- You do well in your work. You learn a lot in lessons because the teaching is good and you want to do your best.
- You enjoy school greatly and behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- You are well cared for by the adults in school and this helps you to feel safe.
- You take lots of exercise and know a great deal about healthy eating.
- You all benefit from the many interesting activities and experiences that the school provides for you, including the excellent extra-curricular activities.
- The headteacher, senior staff and governors run the school well. They are clear about what needs to be done to improve the school.

To improve further, we have asked the school to improve two main things.

- Help some of you to do even better in mathematics by giving you work that is more challenging.
- Help you do even better and learn more in science by giving you even more opportunities to plan and carry out investigations.

We hope that you will help your teachers as they work hard to make your school even better for you. You can help by working hard and keeping up the excellent behaviour.

Yours sincerely

Olson Davis

Lead Inspector