

# St George's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131306
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	315776
<b>Inspection dates</b>	31 January –1 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Blackburne

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	272
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Hardy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs C Buckley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 July 2004
<b>School address</b>	Buxton Road Heaviley Stockport Cheshire SK2 6NX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4808657
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 4800729

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils vary but are generally below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Mark.

## 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 is a good and improving school which has a number of outstanding features. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and feel safe and secure in school because of this. Parents speak highly of the school and typically comment that, 'Children are always treated as individuals with their particular strengths being encouraged and their weaknesses addressed'. Pupils' personal development is outstanding and this is assisted in part by the excellent curriculum. The exciting and interesting curriculum offered to pupils helps them to understand better their own feelings and the feelings of others, through a focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning. They are taught how to become good learners and this helps them to enjoy their education.

Pupils make good progress and reach standards at the end of Year 6 which are broadly average in mathematics and science, and above average in English. Standards have risen over time due to the good teaching pupils receive throughout the school. The more able pupils, however, are not always given sufficiently challenging tasks and activities in mathematics lessons, and this means that not enough pupils reach the highest levels in the statutory tests at the end of Year 6. The school uses effective strategies, including good use of well trained teaching assistants, to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils make good progress.

The school is well led by a very effective headteacher who is supported by an enthusiastic senior leadership team, a number of whom are new to their role. All leaders are clearly focused on raising standards and are beginning to see the positive impact on pupils' learning of plans they have put in place. The school has a good capacity to improve and this is demonstrated by the recent improvement in English standards in Years 3 to 6.

Pupils learn to become active members of their community in school. For example, the members of the very effective school council have been actively involved in the design of the newly refurbished pupils' toilets, and older pupils regularly help younger pupils develop their reading skills. Pupils contribute to the wider community through links with various local and international charities, including the nearby homeless centre. Strong ties with schools abroad give pupils a good understanding of other countries and cultures.

The exemplary behaviour displayed by pupils contributes well to the happy atmosphere that is experienced throughout the school. Parents comment that the school really cares about its pupils and this makes it a special place for children to learn.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage where skills are improving both on entry and on exit. The improvement on entry is partly due to the increased liaison with the on-site playgroup. Skills in reading, writing and calculation, however, remain weaker than other areas of learning. A recent focus on writing is helping pupils to improve their rate of progress in writing. Children are well behaved, showing good attitudes towards each other and towards the adults who care for them. Due to the interesting nature and variety of the activities provided for them, they show well developed concentration skills and perseverance, working independently when required. Teaching and learning are consistently good. The children are provided with a wide range of challenging and enjoyable activities both inside and outside the classrooms.

Children are well cared for and the Foundation Stage staff readily access advice and support from other agencies when required. Leadership and management are good. An action plan for improvement is in place. Based partly on analysis of data, this has identified the right areas for improvement and it is successfully moving the Foundation Stage forward.

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

- Provide tasks and activities with a sufficient level of challenge for the more able pupils in mathematics.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are satisfactory overall. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills and levels of development that are below national expectations. Their levels of development at the end of the Reception year are still below those expected due to their low starting points, particularly in relation to communication, language and calculation. By the end of Year 2, standards are currently almost in line with the national average. This represents good progress. Further good progress in Years 3 to 6 brings standards securely in line with the national average in mathematics and science and above average in English. Achievement is good overall. The number of pupils reaching the highest standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6, however, is below the national average because the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in their lessons. The same is not true for English and science, where the number of pupils reaching the highest levels is above average.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong. Pupils are reflective about their learning and they act responsibly and with consideration for one another. They are confident in discussions and understand that racism and bullying are unacceptable. They have an excellent understanding of their own culture and the culture of others. Pupils' behaviour is often exemplary, which adds to the positive and happy atmosphere in the school. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average with the attendance of the great majority of pupils being good. Pupils suffering long-term ill health and a small number of families for whom regular attendance is a difficulty, adversely affect the overall attendance figure. The school is doing all it can to promote good attendance for all pupils. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe and often make good choices when considering food and exercise. There are very strong links with the community, including the local church and local and international charities. Pupils are well prepared for their future by the basic skills they are developing well in school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good in all areas of the school. Good classroom management and effective organisation are consistently strong features of this school. Effective teaching and good relationships with pupils result in pupils' very positive attitudes to work and behaviour. Setting of pupils in Years 3 to 6 for English and mathematics has a positive effect

on raising standards. The consistent and effective use of lesson objectives focuses the teaching and tells the pupils clearly what they should learn. Pupils are usually provided with different levels of support and expected to produce different amounts and qualities of work depending on their abilities, although this match of tasks to pupils' needs is weaker for the more able pupils in mathematics than in other subject areas.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school rightly continues to emphasise the importance of the teaching and learning of basic skills and as a result has recently been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Since the last inspection the curriculum has broadened considerably. The school has focused upon the development of an increasingly thematic approach to planning which makes very effective links between subject areas. This results in the production of some work of a very high quality in the foundation subjects. ICT facilities and provision are good and the school has been awarded the ICT Mark. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which include German, a newspaper club for the most able and many sporting opportunities. High quality enrichment activities include workshops for pupils and their parents as well as an extensive programme of visitors into school and visits to a variety of places to stimulate pupils' interests, including residential visits. The outstanding curriculum experienced by the pupils contributes considerably to their outstanding personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. All pupils are exceptionally well cared for by a highly committed staff; the interest of the pupils is paramount. All statutory safeguarding arrangements are in place and the school conducts regular risk assessments to ensure the safety of all pupils. The Peer Massage initiative is excellent in helping pupils to consider the feelings and emotional needs of others whilst creating a calm, relaxed atmosphere in class groups. Pupils are well guided by their academic targets and explain how they are used to improve their learning. Marking also informs pupils of their progress and guides them well. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored and interventions are targeted to pupils in need of further help. The tracking of the performance of those groups of pupils with a particular need is excellent and this leads them to make good progress in the areas they find difficult. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and have plans in place designed to cater for their particular needs; this helps them also to make good progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher is a strong and visionary leader who communicates her vision well to her staff team. She has developed a senior leadership team, which is supporting the drive to raise standards. She has guided the school well through a series of staffing changes, during which she has remained clearly focused on the interests and education of the pupils in her care. The school evaluates itself well and the senior leadership team and other leaders in the school have identified areas for development and drawn up and implemented plans designed to promote improvement. The impact on pupils' progress is beginning to be seen but this has not yet been fully realised across the school. School governors are very supportive of the school and have a

clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. The school has a good relationship with parents, who are almost all very supportive, and is highly regarded in the local community. The school has developed many good links with other schools both in the area and abroad for the benefit of all the pupils involved. It is well resourced and the headteacher and governors work well together to face the considerable challenges posed by the maintenance and upkeep of the Victorian school buildings. The school provides good value for money.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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 the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 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**

Thank you for the special welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. Everyone was very polite and helpful in answering our questions.

We judge your school to be good and found that some areas are outstanding. Your school is a very caring place, and the kind and helpful teachers give you very clear guidance on how to improve your work. The way you are developing into responsible young people with excellent behaviour is outstanding. You all work hard, learn well and have a very sensible attitude to your lessons.

Your headteacher leads the school well. She makes sure that, as well as trying to help everyone to be the best person they can be, she also helps them to do as well as they can in their learning.

We could tell that you like your teachers and enjoy your lessons. We were very pleased that you visit interesting places and have lots of visitors into school to help to make your learning even more exciting and fun. It is excellent to have so many things to do in school, and so many activities to choose from after school. We were very impressed by the way you try to help others and the sensible way you do the jobs you are given.

We have asked your teachers to help those children who are very good at mathematics to be even better by giving them tasks to do that are even more challenging. You can help them by always trying hard and doing the best that you can.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make your school even better.