

St George's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 100827 |
| Local Authority | Southwark |
| Inspection number | 323357 |
| Inspection dates | 29–30 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | John Carnaghan |

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) | 166 |
| 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 Nicholas Elder |
| Headteacher | Mrs Teresa Nouri |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 July 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Coleman Road Camberwell London SE5 7TF |
| Telephone number | 020 7703 4772 |

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection dates | 29–30 June 2009 |
| Inspection number | 323357 |

Fax number

020 7277 1937

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Age group | 4-11 |
| Inspection dates | 29-30 June 2009 |
| Inspection number | 323357 |

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St George's school is smaller than average. Almost all of its pupils come from minority ethnic groups and speak a first language other than English. The school has about double the average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The largest group of these pupils has dyslexia. It has a higher than usual percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Reception class.

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 provides a good education and is a happy place, where pupils thrive. Its quest for improvement through better teaching and a stimulating curriculum is succeeding, as standards across the school are rising. From usually very low starting points when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement, including for those who speak English as an additional language and those who are dyslexic, is good.

Lessons are interesting because teaching is consistently good. Lively activities and teachers' high expectations engage pupils completely. Teachers focus clearly on what should be learnt and carefully consolidate what has been gained, helping pupils learn well. Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and cooperation are often exemplary. Teachers are most courteous to their charges, who respond with politeness and consideration for everyone in the classroom. The curriculum is good. A particular strength is the number of interesting trips for pupils. These events are carefully integrated into pupils' studies to complement them, as well as offering inspiring occasions to encourage literacy development.

Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They enjoy school enormously and attendance is excellent. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to grow into healthy adults and are well aware of the significance of a good diet and plentiful exercise. Most appreciate the healthy school meals that they all eat. Pupils know they are well cared for and they feel safe in the school, in the knowledge that adults are both kind and approachable. Their academic guidance is only satisfactory. While some of their books are very well marked, this is inconsistent and, because they have so few targets, pupils receive too little clear advice on how to improve their work.

Parents have very positive views of the school and particularly praise the curriculum and pupils' trips. They have no significant concerns. One typical comment was, 'The school provides a very good environment for children to learn. Teachers are always available for the children and their parents.' Many parents applaud the strengths of the headteacher. She plays a vital role, providing clear leadership and promoting high standards from her colleagues. All staff work cohesively, sharing the same values. Close links with a variety of educational institutions, near and far, benefit the school considerably. For example, the school gains financial and other help from its association with Trinity College, Cambridge. The development plan is a little unwieldy, but identifies the correct priorities and provides a good template for the future. The school's strong focus on self-improvement has ensured good progress since the previous inspection and good capacity for the future. Governors support the school well and key members monitor and challenge strongly.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children usually enter the Reception class with skills and abilities well below those expected for their age, especially in personal and social development and language and communication. However, the attainment on entry of children currently attending the school is similar to age expectations. Children achieve well from their low starting points. However, in most years they still enter Year 1 with standards below expectations, particularly in their capabilities in linking sounds to letters and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Children benefit from a good curriculum, which lays secure foundations for future learning. Staff create an environment in which children are well looked after and where they are very happy and secure. Children enjoy learning and feel confident in contributing enthusiastically to activities and asking for help when they need it.

Teachers plan a good balance between adult-led elements and opportunities for independent work with activities children choose for themselves. Activities are well matched to children's abilities and good use is made of the pleasant, very well-resourced outside area. Movement around class and outside is well managed and carried out safely. Teaching and learning are good, with a particular emphasis on the accurate use of language and children's creative development. Assessment and record-keeping systems are good. Teaching assistants play a valuable role in promoting learning through their interactions with individuals and groups.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and have resulted in better systems, for example in assessing progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement across the school by consistently giving pupils advice on how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils usually enter Year 1 with standards that are below those usually seen for their age. While they have been well prepared for Key Stage 1 in many ways, they lag behind their contemporaries in some important areas, such as literacy. Consistently good teaching that maintains a strong focus on meeting pupils' learning needs, promotes good achievement across the school. Precisely targeted help to every pupil who needs it ensures that achievement is good for all groups, including those pupils who have dyslexia and those at an early stage of learning English.

Recent teaching and curriculum initiatives such as the 'big write' have had a positive impact on standards, particularly in English. Initial national assessment results confirm the school's view that, in 2009, attainment has improved considerably in both Key Stages. Pupils leave the school with standards that are average, which is commendable given their low starting points. Careful attention to previous variations in the performance of girls and boys has evened out the disparities by adjusting the way subjects and topics are taught.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' calm assurance and splendid maturity contribute powerfully to good achievement. Behaviour is excellent and pupils relate positively to their fellows and to staff and are keen to please adults. One reported, 'Teachers expect us to try our best'. They are mainly treated as young adults and react positively, saying they enjoy school life, and like and trust their teachers. Pupils' affirmative views of the school are reflected in their outstanding attendance. They have a very good idea of what is right and wrong and act on this, showing open-mindedness towards others, whatever their background or faith.

Under teachers' watchful guidance, pupils develop great independence as they learn. Older ones happily work in groups, pairs or alone, as required. Pupils know how to stay safe, both in and out of school, and report that incidents of bullying are negligible. The school council

provides a popular forum for their views, many of which are promptly acted upon, improving areas such as the playground. Pupils regularly raise money for worthwhile causes, such as Water Aid. With their growing maturity and independence, and good progress in developing basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, their preparation for the future is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well, partly because teaching is consistently good or better. Relationships are very positive and lessons proceed briskly, which keeps pupils involved and interested. Teachers know pupils very well and constructive relationships encourage pupils' excellent behaviour, hard work and concentration. Teachers usually plan activities to match the needs of every pupil, to ensure the right degree of challenge for all.

Effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures pupils who find work difficult quickly receive the help that they need to maintain their pace of learning. There are many opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning, as a class and in smaller groups. In the best lessons probing questions challenge pupils' thinking. In one outstanding lesson pupils thoroughly enjoyed establishing the best possible sequence of commands to operate electronic devices. The way they worked in teams was exceptional. Much highly stimulating teaching makes excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) and teachers use interactive whiteboards creatively to engage pupils and to maintain a rapid pace.

The quality of marking is inconsistent. Some is detailed and promotes worthwhile written dialogue with pupils. However, this is not always the case.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well adapted to pupils' learning needs and increasingly involves child-initiated topics, allowing them to select the direction of their work. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a number of changes. The reshaped curriculum combines different subjects to stimulate interest and link areas of learning. This helps pupils understand the relevance of what they are learning and brings subjects alive. For example, pupils in Year 6 were interested to find out what life was like for black Londoners in the 1940s. New developments include the improvement in English through the introduction of the 'big write'. ICT is used very well. Many pupils can log in to a dedicated website, submit homework and communicate with parents and teachers. These new exciting initiatives are not yet fully implemented across the school.

The splendid range of visits to places of educational interest, such as the Imperial War Museum and St Paul's Cathedral, promote pupils' enthusiasm. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 go on residential visits to the Isle of Wight and France. A good variety of after school activities develop sporting, musical and other interests and are well attended. These contribute to pupils' good personal development and add to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils appreciate that they are well looked after and know there are many adults to whom they can turn, should they need help or advice. The school correctly prides itself on the quality of its pastoral care. Formal arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and well-being while in school or on trips are robust. The school is quick to identify where pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or if they are held back because of a limited grasp of English. Appropriate extra support is rapidly put into place, and such is the quality of the interventions and other strategies employed that these pupils make rapid progress. Overall, the achievement of these groups of pupils is at least as good as that of their peers.

The school occasionally uses targets to explain to pupils the level they are working at and to indicate the next steps in their learning journey. However, this practice is limited and most pupils do not have written targets for improvement. While much marking is regular and encouraging, it does not identify weaknesses or provide pupils with clear, unambiguous advice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior staff work closely together and share their vision of St George's as an inclusive school. All adults work cohesively for the common good of the pupils. Self-evaluation processes are thorough and provide an ongoing picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school development plan is central to its plans for the future and identifies the correct priorities. The school's progress towards meeting its objectives is regularly monitored by teams of staff and by the governing body. Governance is good and governors offer steady support. A core group of committed governors monitor the school regularly and use this information to challenge the school appropriately.

The school runs smoothly day-to-day because it has good management and administrative systems. The school's inclusion agenda is thoroughly addressed by excellent work from the middle managers responsible for pupils at an early stage of learning English, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are gifted and talented.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Good strategies help pupils engage with local, national and global communities. Very strong links with numerous local churches and a close association with Trinity College, Cambridge are highly beneficial to the school. The study of French includes a visit to France and pupils use ICT to make further links with a French school. The very strong curriculum is effective in helping pupils learn about and understand others, value diversity and develop shared values.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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? | 2 |
| 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? | 2 |
| 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 | 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? | 2 |
| 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 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| 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? | 3 |

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**

10 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Church of England Primary School, London, SE5 7TF

Thank you for the very polite and friendly welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. You told us that you think St George's is a good school and you are right.

As children start in the Reception class, their skills are much lower than those of most four-year-olds. Teaching is good and your learning and achievement are also both good. Standards are rising and, at the end of Year 6, they are similar to the national average. Teachers plan and provide interesting lessons and make sure you reach your objectives in each one. You help by working so hard and behaving excellently. The mixture of subjects and topics you study (called the curriculum) is good and the many trips you take add extra interest and fun.

Your personal development is good, you told us how much you enjoy school and I congratulate you on your truly excellent attendance. The way you are cared for is satisfactory. This is not to say that teachers do not pay enough attention to your welfare, because they do. However, you do not get enough clear advice about how your work could be improved. The headteacher and her dedicated team of staff all work well together to make sure you get a good education.

I have asked the school to concentrate on one area that needs improvement:

- to make sure teachers' marking and the targets that you are set give regular, clear advice about how to improve your work. If you are unsure what you need to improve, you should ask.

Once again, many thanks for all your help. It was great meeting you.

Yours faithfully

John Carnaghan

Lead Inspector