

St George Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109145
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	324910
Inspection date	25 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	107
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	17
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Davis
Headteacher	Clare Gundry
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Queen's Parade Brandon Hill Bristol BS1 5XJ
Telephone number	01173 772480

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	25 September 2008
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Fax number

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school near the centre of Bristol. A minority of children travel across the city to attend the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average, mainly with literacy needs. There is a high proportion of pupils from different ethnic groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is situated nearby in a separate building. A high proportion of children enter the Nursery with English as an additional language. Facilities from a local school are used to support the curriculum, particularly in physical education (PE). The school has recently gained the Healthy Schools Award, the Inclusion Standard, and the Bristol Standard in relation to work in the EYFS.

There is an after school club run on the school premises which is not run by the governing body and is registered by Ofsted.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour are the result of the overall good care, support and guidance. The headteacher takes a strong and effective lead in ensuring the pupils feel safe and secure. Standards are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the EYFS because the provision is well matched to their needs. From this point onwards, progress is satisfactory. Leaders have accurately identified that further work needs to be done to raise standards in writing, especially for boys, and in problem solving in mathematics. Leaders have made a start in tackling these issues through improvements to the satisfactory curriculum. However, their effectiveness has not been fully evaluated.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and most attend regularly. Pupils display a good regard for the well-being of each other. Parents strongly support the school. Two comments from parents that illustrate the school's strengths are, 'the school encourages the importance of helpful and friendly behaviour which is an important part of learning', and 'my child has learnt to integrate well with children from different ethnic backgrounds'. Pupils say they like the school because 'they know each other and get on well together'. They take on the responsibility to welcome new pupils into the school. They say that their teachers are helpful and patient. They understand the importance of being active and reasons for eating healthy foods.

Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers create a positive atmosphere for learning, make lessons interesting and, as a result, pupils are keen to answer questions and show what they know. However, work set does not always provide enough challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able. When this happens, learning slows. Although pupils have targets, these are not always sufficiently well related to their individual needs to help them identify the next steps for learning.

Leadership and management and the capacity to improve are satisfactory. Steady progress has been made since the last inspection and standards in reading recently improved. Leaders have a clear understanding of those areas of the school's work that need developing so that pupils' progress is improved. Initiatives in place to promote improvement are the right ones. However, evaluation by leaders of learning in lessons is not always regular enough in providing support to teachers to help them improve their work.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a flying start in the EYFS and make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. They come to school with skills that are below expectations, particularly in aspects of language and communication. Those with English as an additional language make particularly good gains in developing their English language skills. By the end of the Reception Year, standards are average and the children have developed good social skills. The children really enjoy coming to school and they work and play together confidently. Good teaching and an imaginative range of activities ensure that they have a rich learning environment with good use of the outdoor area. A typical comment made by a parent was, 'my child has made rapid progress and settled in happily'. The EYFS coordinator provides a clear direction for further improvement and has rightly identified that more needs to be done to improve standards in

writing and calculation in mathematics. Even though children achieve well, these are areas of relative weakness on transfer to Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for boys, and in problem solving in mathematics.
- More rigorously evaluate learning and ensure that teachers are given enough support to help them to improve their work.
- Make sure that teaching consistently challenges all pupils, particularly the more able.
- Ensure that targets to help pupils improve their performance are always closely related to their individual needs.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

From their starting points in the school, children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception Year and are ready to start the National Curriculum in Year 1. Standards overall are broadly average across the school and achievement satisfactory. In 2008, standards at the end of Year 2 were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, with standards in reading showing improvement from those in 2007. Year 6 results in 2008 show a dip in standards to be below average in English, mathematics and science. This year group included a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and standards were also adversely affected by pupils moving in and out of the year group. Standards in the current Years 5 and 6 are broadly average. The school's tracking of pupils shows that most are currently making satisfactory progress across Years 1 to 6. Those pupils with learning difficulties make broadly similar progress to other pupils. There is no significant variation in the progress of different ethnic groups. However, pupils throughout the school are not sufficiently confident in problem solving in mathematics or in using mathematical vocabulary in practical situations. Strategies to improve boy's writing are in place but not yet taking full effect.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are proud of their school. They particularly value their fellow pupils who bring experience of other cultures. Although some play in the outside area can be a little boisterous at times, the pupils say they feel safe, behave well and that there is no bullying. They comment that 'we are responsible for our own behaviour'. A few take advantage of the quiet areas to talk and read or sit together. Social development is strong and the atmosphere in the school is one of harmony and sharing.

Pupils understand the importance of eating fruit and drinking water regularly. They enjoy taking exercise and have responded well to an initiative to encourage them to walk to school. They are very aware of the importance of keeping themselves safe on the busy roads. Pupils' adequate progress in basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), together with their good personal attributes, prepares them satisfactorily for their next school. Pupils have the confidence to express their views openly and are prepared to listen to the views of others, but take only limited responsibility in running the school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' relationships with adults and with each other are very positive and they work well in groups and independently. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage pupils well. Pupils' positive attitudes are a key factor in helping them in their learning. In lessons, teachers' questioning is usually good and they direct questions to different pupils to check understanding and provide challenge. In a numeracy lesson, for example, the teacher posed several difficult questions to develop pupils' understanding of multiplication. However, occasionally questioning is too superficial, requiring simple answers which do not extend learning. Planning does not always take enough account of the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly the more able. As a result, there are occasions when pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Teaching assistants work effectively in small groups to help pupils extend their understanding; however, they are not always deployed sufficiently well such as during whole-class sessions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The provision for personal and social education is strong and sensitively provides for pupils' needs in this area. The curriculum is adapted well to promote a good understanding of health and being safe. Recent improvement to make better links between subjects has successfully increased the enjoyment and involvement of pupils. The provision for modern foreign languages is well established. There are some good examples of how the local area is used to develop pupils' health awareness through bike riding and the 'tour de Brandon Hill'. There is good use of a local school to extend opportunities for PE. Although writing has recently had a sharper focus to help to improve standards, more remains to be done, particularly to support boys in their writing. The promotion of basic skills in numeracy is securely in place; however, there is not sufficient emphasis in the learning opportunities on using and applying these skills. There is a good range of visits to enrich the curriculum. The pupils much enjoyed a recent trip to a museum to study Roman artefacts.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pupils are well known to staff and the school provides a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which to learn. There are robust procedures for safeguarding pupils that meet statutory requirements. Parents appreciate the caring atmosphere. Many parents comment positively on the good care and support provided in the EYFS. Leaders make good use of external support to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and for those with English as an additional language. The school has good procedures in place to promote regular attendance. Marking identifies what pupils need to do to improve their work through helpful comments. Pupils know their group targets for improvement as these are clearly displayed in the classrooms. Pupils with learning difficulties have clearly written individual targets which help teachers to plan for their needs and measure their progress. However, targets for other pupils do not take enough account of their individual needs and they are insufficiently involved in setting individual targets for themselves to help accelerate their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher takes a strong lead in promoting a caring and inclusive ethos. This has resulted in a school with harmonious relationships and the valuing of pupils from different cultural backgrounds. Whilst monitoring of lessons identifies strengths and points for improvement, this is not regular enough to provide teachers with sufficient information to help them improve pupils' learning on a continual basis. School development planning focuses on the right priorities to bring about improvement. However, the criteria identified to measure improvement and the success of initiatives is not sharply enough focused on raising standards. Subject coordinators are knowledgeable about strengths and weaknesses. They have rightly identified the need to strengthen their role in monitoring lessons. Systems for tracking pupils' progress have been recently improved although this information is not yet used to its full potential such as to check on the progress made by different groups of pupils. Governors are committed and supportive of the school. They are beginning to provide more challenge to the work of leaders.

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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?	3
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	3

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?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

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	2
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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

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

Dear Pupils Inspection of St George Church of England Primary School, Bristol BS1 5XJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and were impressed with your friendliness and confidence. The valuable information you gave us was a great help. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and you are making satisfactory progress. The leadership of your school is satisfactory.

What your school does particularly well.

- Your headteacher and other adults make sure that the school is a happy and welcoming place.
- Most of you enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning and behave well.
- You get off to a 'flying' start in the Nursery and Reception Year.
- The school provides good care and ensures you are safe and secure.
- You all get on well together and with your teachers.
- The curriculum is enriched well through trips to different places.
- Lessons are usually interesting, which is helping you to enjoy learning.
- Improvements have been made to help you with reading.

We have asked your headteacher and the other adults to do these things.

- Help you all to do well in your writing and develop your problem solving skills in mathematics.
- Improve how well teachers check what needs to be better, so that they can give you work which enables you all to do your best.
- Ensure work provides challenge for all pupils and particularly the more able.
- Improve the use of targets in lessons so that you have a clearer idea about what you need to learn next.

With your hard work, you can help your school to improve further.

Yours sincerely

Peter Clifton Lead Inspector