

# St German's Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120891
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	327383
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Speakman

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	89
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Edward Gray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Alison Hughes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	School Lane St German's King's Lynn Norfolk PE34 3DZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01553 617246
<b>Fax number</b>	01553 617246

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the beginning of their Reception year with attainment on entry that is below that typical for children of this age. The number identified as having learning difficulties and/ or disabilities is similar to that found in other schools, but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above. Most of these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, behavioural issues or autism. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small number have minority ethnic backgrounds, and are at the early stages of learning English. The school has the Activemark for its provision in physical activity, the Silver Artsmark and the Healthy Schools Award. The School Travel Plan has been recognised by a Silver Standard.

The school is part of The Wiggshall Federation, through which it works in federation with Magdalen Village School. The schools share a single headteacher, governing body and staff expertise.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good and rapidly improving school. There has been significant improvement since the previous inspection three years ago. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen, pupils' personal development has improved, the curriculum and the care and guidance shown to pupils are now outstanding. This is because of excellent leadership and management, which have very effectively, set up the conditions in which improved provision has resulted in better achievement and higher standards. Those responsible for leading and managing the school, including governors, have a vision of St German's as an outstanding school. They are working very effectively towards achieving this aim. Self-review is central to the school's success. Staff constantly consider the school's position on its journey towards excellence and carefully plan the next steps. Through the federation with Magdalen Village School, the governors and headteacher have been successful in building a sustainable staff with the necessary expertise to advise on and support improvement. If school improvement requires additional skills, the federation gives teachers or teaching assistants the opportunity to acquire them. Bearing this in mind and the rapid improvement seen in recent years, the school shows an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Pupils achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently in line with the national average in reading, writing and in mathematics for some years and have not shown the same rapid improvement as that seen at the end of Year 6. This is because the school has focused on raising standards by Year 6 and would now do well to look at improving the pace of learning and the level of challenge to pupils in the Key Stage 1 class. Over recent years, attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen from well below average, to broadly average at the time of the previous inspection to above average at present. This has been mainly in English and mathematics, but now the same pattern of improvement is emerging in science, where standards are broadly average.

Pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils develop exceptionally mature attitudes towards learning and each other. They are extremely caring towards each other and consider it their responsibility to support those who have a variety of personal and learning needs, including those who may have arrived recently in this country. This all helps make the school a very caring place where pupils feel very safe and can enjoy learning and playing a great deal. Pupils have a deep knowledge and understanding of how to get healthy and stay that way. They not only talk with understanding about healthy lifestyles, but also put this knowledge into practice in their daily routines.

Teaching is good and promotes pupils' good academic achievement and excellent personal development. A great deal of curriculum development has taken place since the previous inspection. The school now provides a stimulating and enriched curriculum, which encourages pupils' enthusiasm for learning, by placing much learning into context. Through careful planning, staff provide pupils with the learning skills to enable them to become effective learners both now and in the future. The care and academic guidance shown for all pupils are of a high quality.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress. Many achieve the goals nationally expected at the end by the end of Reception. Leadership and

management are excellent. The leader is enthusiastic, has a love for children and a deep understanding of how young children learn, gained through considerable experience. She has fostered a great team spirit, ensuring that adults who work in the Early Years Foundation Stage have the same approach to children. Through ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes, the leader has a very clear view of the next steps they need to take to improve provision further. She shares the other leaders' vision of excellence and works tirelessly towards achieving this goal.

The range of learning activities is good and there are many opportunities for children to learn through play. Learning is meaningful and enjoyable through linking areas of learning under topic headings. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader monitors provision carefully so that all children experience a good balance across all areas of learning. However, there are limited opportunities for children to learn outdoors. There are many planned occasions for them to work outside, such as riding tricycles to find out about forces but, as there is inadequate covered area, some other aspects of outdoor learning are largely dependent on the weather. The school is aware of this shortcoming and would like to be able to provide an outside classroom offering the same quality of learning opportunities as it does indoors.

Children are cared for exceptionally well. Staff keep good assessment records and the process to track children's progress is very effective in providing adults with a clear understanding of children's attainment. They use this information well to plan the next steps of learning for each individual. Achievement is good because expectations are high and lessons conducted at a brisk pace. Because lessons cover many areas of learning, children find them interesting. Children's personal development, including their behaviour, is excellent. Children are happy, cooperate well and treat all with courtesy and respect.

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

- Raise attainment at the end of Year 2 by further increasing the pace of learning and the level of challenge for pupils of different ages and abilities.
- Improve accommodation and resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage for outdoor learning so that opportunities to learn outside match those provided inside.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make good progress through Reception and this continues as they move through the school. At the end of Year 6, test results have improved significantly and are now above average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. Results in 2008 dipped a little but were still broadly average. The school expected this and these pupils still achieved well against their starting points. Standards in Year 6 are currently once again above average in English and mathematics and continue the trend of improvement seen over recent years. There is the same trend of improvement in science, due to a change in the ways of teaching science in the improved curriculum arrangements. Those who find learning more difficult achieve well against their individual targets. Pupils who have English as an additional language soon learn enough English and achieve well. Although there has been some emphasis on raising attainment in English, mathematics and science, the school is careful to make sure that pupils achieve well in other subjects. There is good quality art on display throughout the school. Standards in information and communication technology are good.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils show great respect for each other and this is evident in their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They support others' differences in a mature and sensible way. Pupils' attitudes to school and to others certainly reflect the school's motto 'Learning together; Aim high; Achieve well', evident in its ethos and strong sense of community. Behaviour is good. That of the great majority is outstanding, but the behaviour of a few pupils still has to be managed carefully by staff. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what they need to do to stay fit and healthy, reflected in their 'Healthy Schools' award and the take-up of the many sporting opportunities available to them within the federation. Healthy choices at lunchtime and snacks at break prove that they put their understanding into practice. Pupils demonstrate an outstanding enjoyment of school and work and play together exceptionally well. Attendance has improved recently and is above average. Pupils feel safe and confident that, if they are experiencing any problems, there is always someone to turn to. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community; for example, through organising the healthy tuck shop, helping to make the school an eco-conscious school and through the school council, which enables them to have an impact on school life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

All teachers have good relationships with pupils and maintain good behaviour in lessons through effective management, even when challenging behaviour presents itself. They provide pupils with good opportunities to work collaboratively. Work is mostly matched well to pupils' individual needs and working groups. High expectations are evident during class teaching sessions, when teachers ask well-directed questions to move pupils on quickly. In the very best lessons, teachers' subject knowledge is strong and planned tasks are challenging, moving pupils on at a brisk pace. Occasionally the pace of lessons slows and there is not enough difference in the activities to ensure that pupils of different ages and ability in the same class progress as quickly as they could. The quality of marking of work varies; some provides clear direction for improving work, but some does not clearly identify the exact steps pupils should focus on. Pupils agree. Skilled and confident teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching at all stages of the school.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school makes particularly good arrangements to take into account pupils' interests in its curriculum planning. While there are very good arrangements to develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, other life-long learning skills, such as how to investigate and explore, are also very much taken into account. The school ensures that pupils identified as needing a little extra support, or in need of further challenges, are provided for well. In addition to the focus on developing pupils' core skills; there are very effective curriculum arrangements to develop their personal, creative and physical skills. The curriculum is organised on a topic approach, which links subjects in a meaningful way and adds relevance, interest and enjoyment to learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing creativity. Art and design, technology, music and drama, for example, all have a high profile. There is very

good provision for physical education. Curriculum enrichment is excellent. An exciting and extensive range of visits and visitors and highly effective links with other schools, including the High School to which pupils move, add greatly to pupils' interest in learning. These help develop pupils' knowledge and understanding very well, including their multicultural awareness.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pastoral care and academic guidance are both outstanding. All safeguarding procedures, including those for health and safety, risk assessments and child protection are fully in place. Before and after-school care for pupils is effective. Pupils receive a healthy breakfast before school at the breakfast club and after school have a range of activities to occupy them purposefully. The school goes out of its way to provide very well for pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special talents, and provides opportunities to develop them fully. Assessment procedures and academic guidance are thorough and robust. Pupils understand academic targets very well and know how to improve their work. They have excellent opportunities to think about their own progress. This process helps them to appreciate what they do well and to understand how they can do even better.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management at all levels are excellent. The headteacher works exceptionally well with other staff and governors within the federation. The headteacher motivates staff and empowers them to fulfil their roles extremely well. All staff are involved in monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of provision within their own areas of responsibility. They contribute to the whole school's self-evaluation and development planning, both of which are of high quality. Targets set for pupils' achievement and for staff performance are challenging and contribute directly to the school's improving profile. The school promotes community cohesion well and is aware that the next steps towards improvement are to develop provision to raise pupils' awareness of global issues. Governors are extremely effective. They are organised well and work in close collaboration with the school. They provide high levels of support and challenge.

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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	1

### 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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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?	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	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

6 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St German's Primary School, St Germans, PE34 3DZ

Thank you for making me welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed the time I spent meeting you and your teachers, visiting lessons to watch you learn, speaking to you to find out what you think about the school and how you help to make it a success.

You go to a good school that is improving at a rapid pace. All the staff work really well together to provide you with a good education. Teaching is good and the curriculum and the quality of care shown for you are all excellent. You make good progress in lessons and reach above average standards in your work. You are well prepared to go on to the next stages of your education.

You help a great deal by behaving really well, taking responsibility very seriously and trying hard to do your best. However, some of you could make more effort to behave as well as most other children. I was impressed by how you respond to challenge and are willing to have a go, however difficult a task. I was very pleased by the sensible way in which you learn, make friends with others and care about each other. You help to make others feel safe in school and enjoy being there. Those of you I spoke to enjoy school very much and find it interesting.

A lot has been done to improve your school since it was last inspected, but this does not mean that there is nothing left to do. I have asked staff and governors to look at raising standards by the end of Year 2 and to improve resources for outdoor learning for Reception children.

I wish you all the best in the future.

David Speakman

Inspector