

# St George's Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123394
<b>Local Authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327900
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Patricia Potheary

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	343
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Thomas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Brittain
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Woodfield Road Shrewsbury SY3 8LU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01743 357133
<b>Fax number</b>	01743 270230

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

recent progress, particularly for the more able pupils

the role of teaching and the curriculum in promoting progress

the way leaders at all levels support the work of school improvement

the accuracy of the school's view of pupils' personal development and well-being.

Evidence was gathered from analysis of school data, the school's self evaluation, the previous inspection report, pupils' work, parents' questionnaires, school policies, monitoring reports, and other documents. Lessons were observed and discussions were held with pupils, senior staff, governors and the school's improvement partner. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self- evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

St George's is a larger than average junior school with very few pupils coming from areas with social disadvantage.. All but a very small minority are from White British origins. There are relatively low numbers of pupils with a variety of learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## 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 school. The school is a harmonious and vibrant community where staff and pupils work effectively together to create a productive learning environment. Pupils make good progress in their academic subjects as a result of good teaching. In addition, due to an outstanding curriculum, they make excellent progress in their personal development. The standard of their work is very high when pupils join the school and remains well above national averages by the time they leave. Pupils of all abilities make equally good progress, including the gifted and talented and those with learning difficulties and or disabilities. Good leadership and management and effective self-evaluation have resulted in sustained very high standards and improving performance, most recently evident in the raised standards in mathematics. The headteacher has a very good knowledge of the progress individual pupils are making each year, which is used to improve the work of any underperforming groups of pupils. This information is not easily accessible to leaders at all levels, however, and it is therefore proving difficult to involve all but the most senior staff in the work of school improvement. There are, for example, differences in the rate of progress made by different year groups, which requires a more coordinated response from all school leaders. The school recognises this and training for all staff in a new system for tracking the progress of different groups is underway. Carefully planned lessons, where teachers show thorough subject knowledge, support pupils in making good progress in English and mathematics. This is also the case in science, where progress is exceptionally good. Several pupils described how teachers 'explain things really well'. Lessons are frequently fun, which pupils find motivating. Nevertheless, although teachers know their pupils well, the assessment of how much each one has learned is not regular enough. This means that some lessons do not take learning forward sufficiently fast for all pupils, and occasionally lack challenge. This is particularly evident in writing where progress is slower than it is in other subjects. The school is accurate in its judgement that pupils' personal development and wellbeing are outstanding in every way. Pupils clearly enjoy school and their attendance and behaviour are excellent. They take on significant responsibilities, contributing in a mature and conscientious manner. There are many examples, including the school council, which is instrumental in several ongoing improvements, such as better provision for healthy eating and in seeing that the building is kept repaired. Other pupils in Year 5 visit the infants' school to support those who are moving up to the junior school and the highly active eco committee ensures that everyone is involved in recycling, including composting. Procedures to safeguard pupils are thorough and robust, and care, guidance and support are good overall. The school has some innovative provision to support pupils who are more vulnerable; for example, dedicated staff accompany some pupils to lunch, help them with their choices and sit with them in a 'family' group. The school also keeps detailed records of each pupil's progress against challenging targets so that where pupils do fall behind they receive specialist support. Excellent links with other agencies mean that welfare concerns are very well managed. Parents are very positive about the school and several mentioned the skilled teaching. They particularly like the good academic progress being made, but also, as one explained, there is 'a wide range of activities which have developed my child's sense of identity and responsibility and, most of all, he has had fun'. The school is always seeking to further improve communication with parents, being aware that a very small minority of parents would like enhanced contact. However, most parents work closely with school staff and, for example, one group helps to run the very successful 'walking bus'. Pupils are equally appreciative and several discussed with pride just how rewarding the relationships are between pupils and with staff, describing how 'teachers and pupils get

along really well'. This is one reason why behaviour is exemplary. Pupils were keen to emphasise that they look out for each other, bullying is extremely rare and that all pupils have some friends to play with so that 'no one is left out'. The exceptionally rich and varied curriculum includes extensive after-school activities, a choir and orchestra and several projects supporting the excellent provision for keeping pupils safe and healthy. Skipping workshops at lunchtime is just one of many examples of how active pupils are encouraged to be. There is a wealth of opportunities for pupils to take part in sport and the performing arts. The choir has performed in many concerts, including one in Shrewsbury Abbey. Pupils regularly contribute to the local radio station, recently sharing their views on healthy eating or vending machines for example. There are also strong links with local secondary schools which, among other things, provide many exciting workshops to extend the experiences of gifted and talented pupils. It is this curriculum which makes school such a positive experience for pupils and helps to prepare them extremely well for the challenges of their future education and careers.

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

- Ensure that all lessons are sufficiently challenging for pupils, particularly in writing.
- Involve leaders at all levels in the work of school improvement, through more effective organisation and use of the information on pupils' progress.

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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

**Achievement and standards**

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

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<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	1
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	1

## 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?	2

## 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 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**

14 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Junior School, Shrewsbury, SY3 8LU

Thank you for being so welcoming when I visited your school. I very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons.

Your school is a good school, with many excellent things going on, just as you described. Good, skilled teaching helps you to make good progress in your lessons. As a result, you do well in English and mathematics and very well in science, and the standards you reach in these subjects are very high. I like the way you really enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. You told me that your teachers are very good at explaining things to you and I can see that they have good knowledge of their subjects and make lessons fun. I have, however, asked them to check on your progress more frequently so that all lessons provide sufficient challenge and enable you to make at least good progress, especially in writing. I am sure that you will discuss this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

Senior staff work hard to keep improving the school. For this reason, the standards you maintain are very high. What I would like to see them do now is involve all staff in working more closely together to make sure all of you are doing as well as can be expected.

An excellent curriculum helps you to make outstanding progress in your social and personal skills. You were keen to tell me that the school also keeps you safe and looks after you very well. It is therefore very pleasing to see that you are helping yourselves by taking plenty of exercise and eating such a healthy diet. Your behaviour is also excellent, especially in the way you value learning.

The responsibilities that you take on within the school are impressive, not only the work of the school council and eco committee, but in the way you contribute, for example speaking on the local radio station and working with pupils in the infants school. You clearly really enjoy coming to school. I think that this, alongside your high quality basic skills and excellent skills in working together, will help prepare you very well for your next school and future lives.

Yours faithfully

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector