

# St George's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126353
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340965
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marion Thompson

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	72
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Vince
<b>Headteacher</b>	Laura Almond
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Semington Trowbridge BA14 6LP
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, parents and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including the school improvement plan, assessment information, safeguarding documentation, curricular planning and samples of pupils' work. They also looked at questionnaires from staff, pupils and 60 from parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of teaching, assessment and the curriculum on pupils' progress in mathematics and writing, especially for the most able pupils
- the effectiveness of self-evaluation, including the contribution made by subject leaders and governors
- the impact of provision on the academic progress, personal development and attendance of children of Irish traveller origin.

## Information about the school

This is a very small school, which has three mixed-age classes, including a small Early Years Foundation Stage taught in a class which has pupils aged four and five. The majority of pupils are of White British origin and around 10% of the school population are travellers of Irish origin. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is around that usually found, but there is a significant proportion of pupils who have severe behavioural and emotional difficulties. The current headteacher was appointed in 2007. The number on roll has increased significantly over the last five years. The school has gained the Activemark and Healthy School Award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils of all backgrounds, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress. Attainment at the end of Year 6 varies widely from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils in each group. In the current year it is broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Progress is improving in writing and mathematics, previously both areas of relative weakness. This is because teaching, especially in relation to the use of assessment, is beginning to improve, especially for older pupils. Staff increasingly provide clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, through feedback in class and marking. However, this is too inconsistent across the school and pupils occasionally do not have sufficient opportunities to correct their mistakes. Closer monitoring of pupils' progress is enabling the school to intervene more quickly when pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding or when they find something particularly difficult. However, occasionally the achievement of more able pupils is limited by work set which lacks challenge for them.

The headteacher has won the strong support of parents, including those who are hard to reach. She has led some improvements well, but there is more to do. Better monitoring of the work of the school ensures that planning is good. She enjoys sound support from the staff of the school and good support and challenge from governors and a very active parents group. Subject leaders are increasingly accurate in identifying areas for improvement. Effective partnerships have been used well to enhance the curriculum, for example in sports, and the care provided for pupils. The school's track record in improving some aspects of pupils' achievements, features of teaching and a curriculum which is more attuned to the next steps most pupils need to take ensures that the school has sound capacity to continue to improve.

Sensitive care, support and guidance ensure that pupils feel secure, enjoy their learning and they attend regularly. The school is a harmonious, inclusive and welcoming community where pupils from all backgrounds settle quickly, learn how to keep healthy and safe well and take their considerable responsibilities, for example as members of the school council, seriously. Their satisfactory level of skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology and good social skills are a sound basis for future life and learning. Behaviour is generally good and pupils know right from wrong. A minority of pupils who have severe emotional and behavioural difficulties occasionally disrupt learning. While this is well managed by staff, other pupils occasionally find this slightly disconcerting.

Provision in the Reception/Year 1 class is satisfactory, but occasionally learning objectives are not clear and children do not understand what is expected of them.

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Opportunities are occasionally missed to develop children's communication skills and independence.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- By September 2010:
- Improve the pace of learning for children in the Reception class and Year 1 by:
  - teachers setting clear learning objectives so children have a better understanding of what they are expected to learn
  - ensuring staff fully exploit opportunities to develop children's communication skills and independence.
- Improve progress in mathematics and writing, especially for the most able pupils, by:
  - ensuring lessons present pupils, especially the most able, with a good level of challenge
  - ensuring marking of pupils' work and feedback in class provide clear guidance on how to improve work and the opportunity to follow this up.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Attainment is broadly average by Year 6, representing satisfactory progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils of Irish traveller origin make similar progress to classmates. Writing is beginning to improve, because of the focus on remedying weaker areas such as spelling, complex sentence structure, punctuation and grammar. Mathematics too is improving, due to an emphasis on division, subtraction and problem solving, which pupils find difficult. Reading develops steadily throughout the school. Pupils' satisfactory levels of basic skills are a sound basis for their future study. Occasionally, however, the most able pupils do not make quite as much progress as they should, because work for some lacks challenge. Most pupils are enthusiastic, behave well and enjoy their learning, taking a constructive part in classroom activities. However, the pace of learning is occasionally slowed by the behaviour of a very small minority of pupils with complex difficulties. Pupils report occasional bullying and are uncomfortable at misbehaviour, but feel it is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, in recognition of which the school has gained the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark. Many take part in the large number of opportunities to play sport which the school provides and most choose a balanced diet. The school provides well for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, so not surprisingly, in the main, they treat each other with respect. Pupils new to the school are made welcome by their peers, settle happily and make a good contribution to the school and local community, for example acting in a Christmas play and singing for local residents. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to singing carols with a local clergyman and understand moral messages very clearly. However, knowledge and experience of the range of cultures

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within the United Kingdom are rather limited.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The school promotes a caring and supportive ethos, so that all pupils, regardless of age and background, settle well and develop confidence. This security provides them with a firm foundation for learning. The school works hard to provide support for families and pupils whose situation makes them vulnerable. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory overall, but for those with behavioural and emotional difficulties it is good. Trusting relationships have been developed between travellers' families and the school, which support children's good attendance and personal development. Procedures to secure pupils' health, welfare and safety are good and are enhanced by effective partnerships with other agencies. Parents are well informed about their children's progress through increasingly regular and accurate information about their progress towards their targets in addition to reports. Relationships between pupils and staff are amicable, which encourages pupils to learn. Learning objectives are clear in most lessons, although this is occasionally not the case

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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in Year 1. An increasing number of pupils know what their targets are, although not all are clear about what they need to do to achieve them. The best lessons present pupils with a good level of challenge. However, this is too inconsistent across the school and a minority of lessons lack pace and are not demanding enough for the most able pupils. Increasingly, clear guidance is provided to pupils on how to improve their work, through marking and feedback in class and time is provided for pupils to follow this up. However, this is too inconsistent across the school.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and there are strengths in enrichment activities, such as a link with France which makes pupils aware of another culture. The broad range of extra-curricular activities, for example in music and sport, are popular with all groups of pupils and broaden their interests. Partnerships with other small schools and with sports providers are used well to enhance provision. Increasingly effective use is made of intervention groups to help pupils catch up when they fall behind. However, occasionally work planned does not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school, focused on improving achievement, but there are still aspects of teaching for example, that need fine tuning. Challenging targets have been used effectively to raise expectations. The school has moved on in areas such as self-evaluation, governance and subject leadership, although several areas of the school remain satisfactory. Self-evaluation is now more focused because a recently introduced system for tracking pupils' progress provides more frequent, accurate and useful information on which to base planning. Teachers are gaining skills in monitoring to perform their subject leadership roles more effectively but this has yet to be fully embedded. Some aspects to teaching and the curriculum are getting better and are beginning to have a positive impact on progress in writing and mathematics. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are increasingly holding the school to account for the education that it provides. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements are thorough. The school adopts recommended good practice across all areas of its work for ensuring the safety of its pupils, including effective working with other agencies. Safe staff recruitment routines and records are comprehensive and robust. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Common values and the needs of the local community are promoted well, for example

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through pre- and after-school care. However, pupils' understanding about diversity in contemporary society is rather limited. The school promotes equal opportunities satisfactorily and works hard to ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to take part in the school's range of activities and to make sound progress in learning.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Levels of skills on entry to the Reception class vary widely from year to year, because of the small number of children involved. In the current year they are above those expected for the children's ages. They make satisfactory progress, enjoy school and reach the broadly expected levels when they start Year 1. However, opportunities to develop language skills are sometimes missed, for example in discussing what they are doing and why. Transition arrangements are well planned and enable staff to build good relationships with parents. Children settle well, because of the good quality of care the school provides and they develop confidence and self-esteem. Some children collaborate well, for example two boys worked at length on a painting of a rocket exploding. Children begin to share, take turns and listen. From time to time, opportunities to develop independence through making decisions, for example whether to play outside or inside, or how to organise activities, are missed. Children take responsibility for tidying their toys away. In the main, children learn to keep safe. They enjoy the healthy snacks that are available. The outdoor area is very small, but children have planned opportunities for exercise in the 'trim trail' from time to time. The curriculum provides a sensible balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities. Support for learning is



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satisfactory, but learning objectives are sometimes not sufficiently clear. There is a good transition to Year 1, with the extension of play activities for those children who need them. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

There was a high and very positive response rate to the questionnaire. The inspection team agrees with the unanimous view that the school keeps pupils safe and makes a good contribution to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. The team did not find evidence to support the concerns of a small number of parents who feel that they do not have enough information about their children's progress, but did identify that a few more able children do not always make quite as rapid progress as they could in their learning.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St George's Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 72 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	58	24	40	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	72	17	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	48	27	45	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	53	23	38	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	55	24	40	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	52	27	45	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	60	24	40	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	55	22	37	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	52	23	38	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	55	24	40	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	57	22	37	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	67	17	28	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	62	20	33	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



17 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Church of England Primary School, Semington, BA14 6LP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. Lots of your parents and carers responded to our questionnaire so please thank them on our behalf. Many of you enjoy school, so you will be pleased to know that it provides you with a sound education where you reach average levels in your work and achieve satisfactorily. It is improving. Children in the Reception/Year 1 class settle in happily and enjoy learning because of the good care the team of staff provides. They too make satisfactory progress and reach average levels when they start Year 1.

Across the school we were impressed with:

- the way in which you are beginning to make faster progress in writing and mathematics
- your enjoyment of learning, the way you take on responsibilities and carry them out well, your good knowledge of how to stay fit, healthy and safe and your regular attendance
- the good care the school takes to ensure you are safe and happy
- the improving teaching and curriculum especially for older pupils
- the strong leadership of the headteacher, who is supported well by governors and is working hard to make sure things continue to improve.

In order to improve things even further we have asked the staff to plan activities that improve your writing and mathematical skills, especially if you find learning easy, by making sure all lessons make you think hard and provide you with clear information on how to improve your work and the chance to follow it up. We have also asked that staff make sure that younger children are clear about what they are doing and have more opportunities to discuss what they are doing, make decisions and organise themselves better.

We hope you will continue to enjoy your learning as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Marion Thompson

Lead Inspector

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