

# St Georges Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126481
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340987
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 November 2009
<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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	122
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Lettin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Molly Johnston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Woodcock Road Warminster Wiltshire BA12 9EZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, breaks and lunchtimes. They held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils and took account of views expressed through pupil and staff surveys. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, data on progress, monitoring reports, policies, planning and 49 parent questionnaires.

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

- the impact of provision on the progress of boys in writing and mathematics
- strengths and weaknesses in teaching, especially how well assessment is used in planning to meet pupils' different needs
- the effectiveness of leadership in improving teaching and increasing progress.

## Information about the school

St Georges is a small primary school where most pupils are of White British origin, and a very small minority are from a range of other ethnic groups. Very few pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. There is a higher than average number of pupils with a variety of special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a small group of reception-aged children taught alongside a small group of pupils from Year 1. A small minority of pupils leave and join each year as the school serves a local army base. The school has the Active Mark Award, the Healthy Schools Award and the Intermediate Stage International Schools Award. There is privately run pre-school provision on the site which was not part of this inspection.

**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

St Georges is a satisfactory and improving school. Pupils thrive and are happy in the delightful and welcoming environment, full of exciting displays of their work. When children first join the school, their skills are broadly in line with those expected for their age. When pupils leave Year 6, their attainment is broadly average, demonstrating that satisfactory achievement has been made. However, the picture is mixed; most girls and pupils with special educational needs make good progress, whereas progress for the majority of boys in writing and mathematics is satisfactory. Pupils in all age groups make good progress and achieve well in reading. Children in Reception and pupils aged five to seven now make good progress overall, which is a clear improvement on previous years.

School leaders have continued to improve the school despite recent disruption arising from building work and significant changes within a very small teaching staff. Good self-evaluation is based upon detailed and accurate analysis of pupils' progress and the right priorities have been identified and systematically addressed. This has been particularly effective with the younger pupils. Staff changes have meant that too few staff are currently able to take the lead in aspects of school improvement. This has slowed the process of raising standards and so the capacity to improve is satisfactory rather than good.

The satisfactory school curriculum supports pupils' personal skills well, particularly in encouraging an outstanding awareness of how to lead healthy lives. The take-up of sport and other activities after school is high and pupils are keen to explain why we should eat more fruit and vegetables. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught in other subjects, but this is not systematically planned to maximise opportunities to increase progress in these areas. In addition, the school recognises that the curriculum in lessons is not focused sufficiently on engaging the imaginations of boys, nor on problem solving in mathematics. Nevertheless, the range of visits, trips and projects to help bring learning to life, are very strong, which is one reason why most pupils and their parents and carers value the education provided so highly.

The quality of teaching is variable and is satisfactory overall. Lessons are often lively and enjoyable with a suitable range of activities which pupils say makes learning fun. In some, where quality is high, pupils are encouraged to work together to solve problems and play an active part in their own learning. In several lessons, however, pupils are not encouraged enough to discuss their work, learning is passive and progress slows. All teachers have a good understanding of each pupil's attainment, but targets are not used sufficiently well in enough lessons to help build learning effectively for certain groups or individuals.

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Pupils are well cared for, feel safe and behave safely. There is good, effective support and guidance to help those with additional difficulties. The school has successfully increased attendance and encouraged good behaviour and an enthusiasm to learn. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and regularly show care and consideration towards others and respect those who are different to themselves.

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

- Raise standards and increase progress in writing and mathematics for boys by:
  - developing a curriculum which engages boys more directly
  - planning to support basic skills more systematically in all subjects
  - increasing the focus on problem solving in mathematics.
- Increase the amount of good teaching to secure faster progress by:
  - improving the way targets are used in lessons to build learning at a rate suited to each individual pupil and to different groups
  - increasing the involvement of pupils in discussing their own work and in working together to solve problems.
- Ensure that all staff are enabled to lead on aspects of school improvement at the earliest opportunity.

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

Pupils' enjoyment of learning is evident as they focus hard on writing witty poems, for example, or read quite complex text with thoughtful analysis. Better use of assessment has supported pupils' good progress, increased achievement and above average attainment for those aged four to seven. For the older pupils, progress has been gradually improving each year for several years, especially in reading, but attainment is average and achievement remains satisfactory overall. This is due largely to the significantly slower progress of boys in developing a wide range of skills in writing. Boys' skills in understanding how to solve problems in mathematics is also slower to develop. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to watch those in the oldest group blossom as they act out different poems and analyse each other's performance with accuracy and skill. Although satisfactory overall, progress in science varies considerably from year to year due to changes in leadership and focus. Pupils also demonstrate satisfactory skills in using computers and technology to present their work, to search for information and to enhance their learning. Pupils with learning and other difficulties usually make good progress from their starting points because they are well supported and can be seen working out letters and sounds, for example, with increasing confidence.

Pupils are polite and well behaved and learning is rarely disrupted, as they want to work hard and do well. The behaviour of the majority is usually exemplary. On occasions, a few pupils do disrupt learning and a very small minority can be unkind to others, which the school is working effectively to address. High quality lunches are enjoyed and appreciated by many. One group, during lunch, spontaneously discussed the quality of

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their lunches from home showing an outstanding awareness of which food is good for them. Pupils have an excellent spiritual awareness, well supported by the Catholic ethos of the school. They also have a good knowledge of other religions and cultures. Many pupils take on responsibilities in school. For example, they get involved in helping as lunchtime buddies or by inviting elderly local residents to school events. They have also been instrumental in bringing about change, for example, in the playground, by establishing a school garden and by getting involved in the travel plan. Pupils are prepared to a satisfactory level for their futures, including sound basic and team-working skills, good attendance and an emerging sense of enterprise.

*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	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</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 quality of teaching is improving with a greater proportion of good or better lessons throughout the school. In some classes, improved and accurate assessment of pupils' skills leads to very effective use of targets and means that each pupil progresses at a rate to suit him/her. This is not consistent and where lessons and targets are not well matched to everyone's needs progress slows, particularly in writing. In some lessons,

<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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expectations are very high and skilled questioning encourages pupils to think creatively and express their views. In a few lessons, teachers do not encourage pupils sufficiently well to talk to others about their work, preferring them to work in silence or to listen for too long. This leads to a lack of engagement by some, particularly boys. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Pupils think that lessons are the best thing about school. As one said, 'They make it fun, so that we can understand and enjoy it.'

The curriculum is well organised to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. The school recognises that the curriculum does not focus enough on problem solving in mathematics, and that it is not sufficiently well developed to better meet the interests and learning styles of boys. The extensive range of additional activities, linked with organisations from home and abroad, helps make pupils globally aware, encourages high quality participation in many sports and the arts and develops pupils' confidence and independence in dealing with others. There is support given to basic skills in most subjects, but without systematic planning, opportunities are missed to develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in a range of different and meaningful contexts.

Pupils are well cared for and kept safe at every level. The school is very successful in helping pupils who experience difficulties, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, linking closely with parents, carers and other agencies, providing timely support and keeping careful records. Work with pupils to encourage good behaviour is generally effective although, for a minority, this is still ongoing. Transition to secondary school is well planned and pupils move smoothly between year groups in their mixed-age classes.

*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 school is well led by the headteacher, who has secured continued improvement each year from a low baseline. This has been achieved while having to develop staff leadership responsibilities and to involve all staff in raising standards. A high quality system has now been established for monitoring progress accurately and to better recognise shortcomings within teaching. Key leadership skills in developing teaching and assessment have been established. The resulting actions, as with the new writing strategy, are leading to improvement and challenging targets have been generally met. However, not all staff are in a position to take on leadership responsibility at this stage.

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In such a small staff, this has slowed the rate of improvement and the effectiveness of leadership is currently satisfactory. Governors play a significant role in ensuring that the improvements continue and partnerships from other organisations are used effectively to support the work of leadership as well as learning.

Safeguarding procedures are of good quality, meet all requirements and are evaluated for their effectiveness regularly. The school places a very high priority on keeping pupils safe and secure. Careful tracking of the progress of different groups ensures that, regardless of ethnicity, ability, difficulty or background, most groups, with the exception of some boys, do as well as they can. There is no evidence of discrimination. Pupils are actively taught to understand and respect those from different cultures, or who lead different lives in their own community, and the school has some very strong links internationally. This has resulted in a harmonious school community and a good promotion of community cohesion.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children's learning and development in Reception have recently improved and are now good in all the areas of learning. Good links with parents, carers and pre-school providers ensure a smooth transition into school, which parents and carers particularly appreciate. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children are working at above national average levels. A skilled approach to teaching phonics (linking sounds and letters) means that children are excited about writing and reading. For example, one boy triumphantly explained how he had discovered how to write the word 'dog' for himself.



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Leadership is good, especially in the way accurate assessment and robust monitoring systems have recently been established to secure good progress. Children are therefore quickly becoming independent, many, for example, already deciding for themselves when to put on their coats, or working happily on their own sorting beads and money. Their developing social skills are evident as they make up games together, playing at being teacher or pupil, or making sandcastles for example. The provision is good, with good quality teaching from all staff and secure systems for ensuring children's welfare. Children are encouraged to work outside and well-planned trips to a local park increase their understanding of the nature around them. However, the outside environment lacks high quality permanent equipment. In addition, it is not organised sufficiently well to provide enough opportunities for children to explore productively for themselves in the fresh air. Nevertheless, there is a suitable range of curriculum activities to encourage good progress in all the areas of learning and children clearly find the environment stimulating.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school; they particularly appreciate their children's enjoyment of school and how safe they are. They find their children make suitable progress and think the school provides good support for those with particular needs. A very small minority expressed concerns which, supported by inspection findings, are reflected in the report. Parents and carers like the 'first class communication' and how, 'we have been made to feel so welcome'. Another typically stated that, 'The improvements have been appreciated by everyone'.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Georges Catholic 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 122 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	69	12	24	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	65	12	24	3	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	45	24	49	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	55	19	39	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	53	20	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	39	25	51	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	53	21	43	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)	18	37	24	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	49	22	45	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	43	25	51	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	33	27	55	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	47	21	43	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	55	17	35	2	4	1	2

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.**



8 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Georges Catholic Primary School, Warminster, BA12 9EZ

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons. Your school is a happy and welcoming community. It is a satisfactory and improving school with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Senior staff work hard to keep developing the school and, for this reason, your work is getting better each year.

Enjoyable teaching helps you to make at least satisfactory progress in your lessons and standards are rising. You told us that teachers make lessons fun and interesting. As a result, you do particularly well in reading. You really enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. We have asked your school to help boys make even more progress, especially in mathematics and writing. To do this we would like them to help you more with writing and mathematics in other subjects. We would also like to see that more lessons are of good quality to help you make faster progress. To help this happen we would like to see that targets in all lessons are challenging enough for you all. We would also like to see you helped to discuss things and solve problems in more lessons. We are sure that you will talk about this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

You have many opportunities to contribute well to school life and the community. Your behaviour is good, especially in the way you value learning. You usually show good respect and understanding towards others, including those who have different beliefs and ways of living. Sometimes though one or two of you are still not as kind as you should be to each other, which you might like to think about. The responsibilities that you take on are heartening, particularly in the school council, and the way you help each other on the playground. You were keen to tell us that the school keeps you safe and looks after you very well. It is therefore impressive to see just how well you are helping yourselves by taking plenty of exercise and eating such a healthy diet.

We think that this, alongside your mature attitudes to working with others, helps you to be suitably prepared for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector

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