

St George's Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120607
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358803
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry Elston

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Revd. Martyn Taylor
Headteacher	Carol Dunlop
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2008
School address	Kesteven Road Stamford PE9 1SX
Telephone number	01780 763654
Fax number	01780 763654
Email address	enquiries@st-georges-stamford.lincs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed all eight teachers and visited 19 lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, curricular planning documents, examples of the ways the school promotes community cohesion, evidence of lesson observations and information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 36 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent does the teaching and curricular provision promote good progress in reading?
- What impact do middle managers have in raising standards?
- How well does the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enable children to make good progress?
- How effectively does the school provide pupils with a clear awareness of the diverse cultures in the world?

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school where the vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. Over half the teaching staff, including members of the leadership team, have been appointed since July 2010. The school has recently gained the Eco Bronze award. A private organisation runs pre-school care next to the school site. This will be inspected separately.

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. Pupils from all backgrounds make satisfactory overall progress so that attainment is broadly average by Year 2 and Year 6. Progress is good in mathematics and writing, and satisfactory in reading, which is rightly the school's main priority for improvement.

Children settle quickly into school and make satisfactory progress in the Reception class. However, boys' attainment in writing and number lags behind that of girls, and the recently developed outdoor area is too small to accommodate all children comfortably.

Pupils develop their personal skills well. They enjoy school, attend regularly and have a good awareness of how to live healthy lives. They feel safe and show a thorough understanding of the need to take care when using the internet. They reflect deeply on issues such as the hardships faced by people in wartime, and learn much about those in the world who are less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for global and local charities. They have a satisfactory awareness of different faiths and cultures and enjoy celebrating the festivals of people from around the world. Overall, they are satisfactorily prepared for the future.

Pupils speak highly of their teachers because they make learning fun and are very good at helping them when they find work difficult. The school has done much to improve the teaching of writing and number and provide more opportunities in the curriculum to develop these skills further. This has raised attainment in these subjects from below average in 2006 to above in 2010. In reading, attainment is lower because of shortcomings in the teaching of word-building skills, a lack of exciting reading resources and insufficient opportunities in the curriculum to research topics independently using books and the internet.

Parents and carers are right to feel that adults care for their children well. One, typical of many, commented, 'It is a happy school where our children feel safe and valued.' Pupils know who to turn to if they have concerns and feel that the rules to encourage good behaviour are applied fairly.

The headteacher has done well to integrate new staff with established members so that all work well as a team. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection and, with the exception of reading, attainment is rising. Its self-evaluation systems are mostly accurate and based clearly on pupils' performance compared with local and national figures. Recently appointed subject leaders have established clear priorities, and their action plans provide a sound framework for improvement in their areas of responsibility. However, they have yet to observe teaching and learning at first hand or make detailed analyses of the data on pupils' progress in order to rectify any weaknesses in provision. The school has a satisfactory capacity to maintain its improvement.

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Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2011 raise attainment in reading to the levels reached in writing and mathematics, by:
 - providing more exciting reading resources
 - ensuring that teachers teach word-building skills regularly and effectively
 - making better use of the internet to help pupils research topics.
- Raise attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing more activities to stimulate boys' interest in writing and mathematics
 - exploring ways to extend the outdoor area.
- Ensure subject leaders take a full part in raising attainment by:
 - evaluating the quality of teaching and learning first hand
 - providing teachers with regular data concerning the progress of all groups of pupils in their class
 - leading interventions to rectify any weaknesses.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy reading and use their word-building skills effectively to work out unfamiliar words. Their writing is mostly presented well, and they take care with spelling and punctuation when doing tasks such as writing about how a magnetic toy works. By Year 2 the majority of pupils count accurately, and a few subtract numbers such as five from 11 quickly in their head. Progress is rapid in Year 2 because of the way subjects are linked together to give pupils opportunities to hone their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.

At Key Stage 2, pupils write confidently and use their skills well to write stories about imaginary worlds or to develop an argument about whether they should bring snacks to school. While most read fluently, for some it is a chore and they take a while to get started. Not all find it easy to work out unfamiliar words and they guess rather than use their knowledge of sounds. They make good progress in mathematics, and many calculate quickly in their head. They use data well, and as early as Year 5 they interpret the data on complex line graphs of temperature and rainfall.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, and many do well in their writing. They are supported effectively in class, and have some opportunities to work on their own and develop their independent learning skills. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. They benefit from good support, and over the last five years nearly all have attained at least the nationally expected levels by Year 6 in English and mathematics.

Pupils behave well and concentrate hard in lessons. They care about the environment and the 'eco warriors' work effectively to remind others to switch lights off and recycle waste.

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They take responsibility well for their school and local community. For example, older pupils act maturely as 'buddies' for younger ones, and school councillors have helped to make some good improvements to the provision for play equipment in the playground.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In typical lessons, teachers make learning fun by using technology such as the interactive whiteboards to illustrate their teaching points. Pupils respond well to this approach and enjoy dragging numbers and sentences across the screen. Teachers use questions well to make pupils think carefully and give them confidence through astute use of praise for their contributions. The teaching of writing and number skills is a strength because teachers focus clearly on establishing the basics of spelling and calculation. This approach gives pupils the confidence to tackle any challenge. However, in reading, not all teachers focus sufficiently on developing pupils' word building skills to enable them to read difficult books.

The teachers make satisfactory use of assessment information, for example to plan different lesson activities for different ability groups. They mark pupils' books diligently, and give good guidance on the next steps in their learning. This is a big improvement since the previous inspection.

The curriculum includes well-planned personal, social and health education that gives pupils a good awareness of health and safety issues and develops their awareness of what

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it takes to be a good citizen. It provides some good opportunities to write and use number across a range of subjects, but not enough to improve their reading by researching topics using books or computers. A wide range of visits and visitors and strong links with the church enhance the curriculum and make learning enjoyable.

Parents and carers appreciate the way all adults know their children so well, and are always there if any individual needs help. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from sensitive care, both from the school and from outside professionals. Systems to improve attendance are rigorous and have reduced absences greatly over recent years. The school does much to discourage aggression and bullying, and the rare incidences are managed well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads with high expectations of pupils and staff, a determination to banish any form of racism or discrimination and a commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all. She manages change at a sensible pace and has supported the many new staff well over the last year. She involves staff and parents and carers when setting the school's priorities, which are centred on ambitious targets. Middle managers are taking increasing responsibility for the levels of attainment in their subjects, but have yet to be fully involved in the monitoring of the performance of pupils and teachers with sufficient rigour to have a real impact on standards of teaching and learning.

The school has good partnerships with other schools in the area that helps provide cost-effective opportunities for training and the sharing of expertise. These have helped improve the teaching and learning of both writing and mathematics. Strong links with parents and carers ensure that they feel well informed about the school's work.

The governing body provides satisfactory support and challenge. It has a sound awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is not afraid to hold the leaders to account. They have a good involvement in establishing safeguarding systems, which are robust and reviewed regularly.

The provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils learn about different faiths, cultures and social backgrounds through the religious education curriculum, links with the local community and emerging partnerships with other schools in this country and overseas.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is satisfactory. The attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly at the level expected nationally for their age, and they make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Adults work well as a team and provide a good balance of work and play. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory, but the activities do not always fire boys' interests and their attainment is a little below that of girls in writing and mathematics. The recently developed outdoor area is stimulating, but too small to enable children to work and play comfortably when the large wheeled toys are out. The 'learning journeys' provide a clear record of children's progress, and adults make good use of opportunities to assess children's work during the day.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good, because adults give them responsibility for taking care of themselves and ensure they know how to stay safe and live healthily. They work in a secure environment and are supported well by adults who know their individual needs well. They learn the rules quickly and behave well. The provision is led and managed competently, with a clear focus on how to make improvements.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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

The views of parents and carers are mostly positive. They appreciate the way their children enjoy school and feel safe. The vast majority feel that teachers do a good job and keep them well informed about their children's progress. A small minority say that adults do not always manage occasional incidences of poor behaviour well, but inspectors found no evidence of this.

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 Aided 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 163 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	61	13	36	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	61	12	33	2	6	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	36	20	56	3	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	47	16	44	3	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	42	19	53	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	36	18	50	3	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	42	17	47	3	8	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)	9	25	16	44	2	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	36	19	53	4	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	28	15	42	4	11	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	33	18	50	4	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	42	16	44	4	11	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	61	11	31	3	8	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



24 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Church of England Aided Primary School, Stamford, PE9 1SX

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work hard in lessons and hearing you sing and play musical instruments so beautifully. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how much you like school. Your school is satisfactory, which means that some things are good and some could be better.

Inspectors were impressed with your good behaviour and the way you listen carefully to your teachers. You make satisfactory progress and know how to keep safe and live healthy lives. You think a lot about people in different countries who are poor and you try to help them. We noted how well you take responsibility and look after the younger children. There is an interesting range of activities provided for you, and you enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school. Your teachers make learning fun, and are good at helping you when you find things difficult. All staff at the school take good care of you.

Your leaders are always looking for ways to improve your school. These are the improvements we want your school to make.

Help you to make faster progress in reading. You can do your part by reading more at home and making better use of computers to find information for yourselves.

In the Reception class, help boys to improve their writing and number skills, and give the children more space to work and play outside.

Ask the teachers in charge of subjects to check more carefully on how well you are learning to help you make even faster progress.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector

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