

St George's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106236
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	287453
Inspection date	14 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Robert Robinson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Taylor
Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Walker
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002
School address	Church Street Hyde Cheshire SK14 1JL
Telephone number	0161 3682848
Fax number	0161 3682022

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British ethnic backgrounds with a rapidly increasing number of pupils from Asian or Asian British ethnic backgrounds. An above average proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are below average. The area is disadvantaged socio-economically. Since the last inspection a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. In Years 3 to 6 there have been unavoidable staffing changes during the past two years. The school has gained the National Healthy School award.

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 Primary is a good school which serves its community well and provides good value for money. Parents appreciate the education and care provided for their children. A typical parental statement encapsulated the feelings of most: 'A wonderful school which my children enjoy attending'.

Pupils achieve well during their time at the school because the quality of teaching and the curriculum are good. Most lessons are planned well, though occasionally, particularly in mathematics, higher attainers are not challenged sufficiently. Teaching assistants are used effectively to help pupils with learning difficulties/and or disabilities and pupils learning English as an additional language. The pace of learning is brisk because of teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. The marking of work is satisfactory though not consistent. In some age groups the marking clearly states how well pupils have done and how they can improve. However, in others the marking simply praises and does not provide helpful comments as to what could have been improved. Teachers are beginning to set targets for pupils but these are too general and not linked sufficiently to individuals' small steps of learning.

Children have a good start to schooling in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception). Because of good or better teaching these children make brisk progress and most reach or exceed expected standards by the end of Reception. In Years 1 to 6 pupils build well on their prior attainment. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average overall. A high proportion of pupils reach the level expected of their age in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. An above average proportion of pupils reach the higher level in English but fewer than expected achieve the higher level in mathematics.

The school has improved since its last inspection and has good capacity to continue to do so. It has an accurate though modest view of its overall effectiveness. The good leadership and management have successfully dealt with a rapidly changing school population during a time of significant changes of senior leadership. The school has a clear view of its strengths and areas for improvement. Effective management systems have been put in place recently to track the progress of pupils so that underachievement can be spotted and quickly acted upon.

The personal development of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Behaviour both in the classroom and around the school is exemplary. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and show great respect for staff and each other. Pupils are proud of their school and praise the education and care they receive. They get on very well together irrespective of gender or cultural backgrounds.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenge for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics.
- Improve the consistency of marking so that pupils know what they have done well and what they should do to improve.
- Set individual targets for pupils based on small steps of learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Attainment on entry has varied from year to year because of the demographic changes in the area. At the time of the last inspection attainment on entry was

average. However, since then it has moved gradually to below average. By the time pupils join Year 1 their attainment is above average because they have made good progress in Nursery and Reception. Children learning English as an additional language make particularly good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the help they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils continue to make overall good progress in Years 1 to 6. Standards were above average in the 2006 national tests at the end of Year 6 because of strong performance in English and science. However, standards in mathematics were average: although most pupils achieved the level expected of their age, too few pupils reached the higher levels. Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 6 remain above average. The school is on course to meet its targets. The strategies put in place by the leadership and management to improve attainment in mathematics are beginning to have a positive effect, and the gap in pupils' relative performance in English and mathematics is narrowing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school and this is shown in their outstanding behaviour and well above average attendance rates. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to their work; this helps them to achieve well. Bullying is not an issue. Pupils are proud of their school and through the school council make suggestions on how it can be improved. They have a good awareness of how to keep healthy; they watch what they eat and take physical exercise. Pupils benefit from the wide range of physical activities available, both as part of the curriculum and during out-of-school clubs. They get on well together and racial harmony is a strong feature of the school. Pupils raise money for both national and international worthy causes as well as supporting community events. Their thorough grounding in basic skills and their exemplary behaviour prepares them well for future life. The school council agreed with one of its members that 'St George's is a helping, encouraging, loving school'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good with pockets of outstanding teaching which result in pupils making good progress in their learning during the time they are at the school.

Lessons are planned well to interest pupils. Pupils appreciate the many opportunities for practical investigations and to use resources such as the interactive whiteboards and other apparatus to aid their learning. The organisation of lessons is good. Behaviour management of pupils is strong and relationships between staff and pupils are good. Teaching assistants are used very well to help the few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils learning English as an additional language. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on language development and encouraging pupils to contribute to discussions. In some lessons the challenge for higher attainers is insufficient, particularly in mathematics when they have to plough through a great deal of undemanding work before attempting more challenging activities. As one pupil stated, 'I do not often get onto the extension work.'

The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory though inconsistent across the school. In some year groups teachers explain how well pupils have done and what they must do to improve whereas in other classes marking mainly consists of comments such as 'brilliant', 'excellent' and 'good'. Targets are set each half term for three levels of attainment in English and mathematics but

these are too broad and do little to spur on individuals' learning. Pupils are not aware of the small steps of learning they need to make to reach the next level of the National Curriculum.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. Throughout the school a strong emphasis on developing literacy skills both in English and in other subjects helps pupils at all levels of attainment to make good progress. In numeracy increasingly a more investigative approach has been developed, though challenge for higher attainers is a weakness. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Exciting activities stimulate children's interest in all the areas of learning with a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities. A strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy prepares the children well for future learning. Throughout the school first-hand experiences such as visits and visitors are used well to enliven learning. Opportunities for musical tuition and to learn Spanish make a good contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development. The personal, social, health and citizenship education provides pupils with valuable life skills as well as contributing to their excellent attitudes and behaviour. A good range of sporting activities both during school times and after school are enthusiastically supported by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Child safeguarding procedures are in place. Health and safety and risk assessment procedures promote a safe environment. Parents and pupils agree that pupils are looked after well. The learning mentor provides good support for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Bilingual support staff assist those learning English as an additional language well. Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps the children to effectively develop English speaking skills. Established systems are in place to monitor attendance and parents are aware of the need for good attendance and not taking holidays in term time. As a result, attendance rates have been well above average for several years. The leadership has worked together to devise a system to track pupils' progress over time and to use the information to set targets. However, because of reputedly unreliable assessments in the past, confidence in the data has only recently been established in order to set valid challenges for teachers and pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher, during the time they have been at the school, have effectively restructured the leadership and management. Senior teachers now have strategic responsibilities and lead other groups of staff well. As a result, all staff have a voice in the running of the school. Rigorous checking of pupils' learning through observation of teaching has enabled a consistency of approach and expectations throughout each year group. A revised system of checking pupils' progress has successfully identified pupils who are not progressing as fast as they should. In addition, staff training has taken place in order to assess more accurately pupils' levels of attainment. The school is very aware of its strengths and areas for development. In mathematics, the previous year's dip in progress in Key Stage 2 has been redressed because appropriate action has been taken by the leadership to remedy weaknesses. As a result, pupils' have made faster progress in mathematics during the last year. Governance

is good. Increasingly governors are seeking to find out more about the running of the school. Their individual expertise, such as in financial planning is used well. Governors are allocated to particular classes and subjects. This enables them to be better informed so they can more effectively challenge the school about standards. Senior managers report directly to governors on the success of initiatives and future developments.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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 disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of St George's C of E Primary School, Church Street, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 1JL

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed the day I spent with you and our discussions. I agree with the school council that yours is a good school and that 'St George's is a helping, encouraging and loving school'. This because it is led and managed well by the headteacher, staff and governors.

I was very impressed by your outstanding behaviour and interest in lessons. Your attendance is well above average - so keep it up. Staff look after you well and I was pleased that you get on so well together. The standard of your work by the time you leave the school is above average because you are taught well and make good progress. However, I have asked the school to challenge those of you who are higher attainers to reach Level 5 in mathematics. I also want the teachers to mark your work more consistently so you can see how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve. In addition, I have asked the school to set each of you individual targets linked to small steps of learning to help you make faster progress.

I appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. I trust that you will continue to work with the headteacher and other staff to help them to continue to improve the school. I wish you well for the future.