

St Georges Church School

Pastures Avenue, St Georges, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset BS22 7SA

Inspection dates

2–3 April 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has worked effectively to drive improvements in teaching and learning. Leaders ensure that pupils have every opportunity to succeed. They are passionate about providing a good education and care for all pupils.
- Senior and experienced leaders monitor teaching and pupils' progress closely. This provides an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders and governors make sure that a broad range of clubs and activities enrich pupils' experiences across the curriculum.
- Children in early years are well cared for. They make a positive start in the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders ensure that the promotion of equality, together with pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, is a thread which weaves effectively through all aspects of school life.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. They use questioning skilfully to support and challenge pupils.
- Pupils are safe and know how to stay safe. Safeguarding is effective.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy school. They play happily together regardless of their age, gender or background. They are proud to attend school and their behaviour reflects this.
- Teaching, learning and assessment across the school are good because of the decisive and effective action taken by senior leaders. Therefore, different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve well.
- A small proportion of teaching and assessment in mathematics is failing to provide some lower-ability pupils with enough challenge. This is hindering the development of their reasoning skills.
- Teachers put their knowledge of what pupils understand and can do to good use. As a result, pupils write with the skills and complexity expected for their age. However, accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation are not consistently embedded across subjects.
- Most parents and carers are positive about the school. However, further work is required to fully strengthen partnerships.
- Some middle leaders have not developed their skills fully to ensure that their work has a positive impact on school improvement and pupils' outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - supporting middle leaders, especially those in the early stages of developing their role, to have a positive impact on school improvement and pupils' outcomes
 - further strengthening partnership and engagement with parents and carers.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - strengthening weaker teaching and assessment in mathematics, through the sharing of best practice, to provide greater challenge for lower-ability pupils and improve their reasoning skills
 - ensuring that pupils apply grammar, spelling and punctuation correctly across the range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher works determinedly to continually improve the quality of education for pupils at the school. Since her recent appointment, she has worked closely with leaders and schools within the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust (BWMAT) to make improvements in teaching. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievements are now good.
- Leaders present an honest and open picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They undertake a range of activities to check that improvements in teaching are being sustained. There is a clear cycle of monitoring, including effective professional development for teachers. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving.
- Extra funding to support the development of physical education and sport is well planned. A proportion of the funding has been used to provide specialist sports coaching and broaden pupils' experiences. As a result, the school has seen an increased participation of pupils in competitive sports.
- Senior leaders have introduced a new approach for the teaching of writing. Their own monitoring of teaching confirms that teachers understand and use the school's chosen approach effectively so that teaching meets pupils' needs well.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are polite, respectful and tolerant towards one another. Spiritual and moral understanding is fostered effectively through the schools' Christian ethos and understanding of other world faiths. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Topic books show a range of subject areas of interest with opportunities for pupils to write at length. Leaders plan experiences carefully to give purpose to learning, including visits to the local church and an exhibition of work for parents and carers.
- Scrutiny of books shows that the quality of work in pupils' writing and mathematics books is good. However, the quality of writing is not sufficiently strong in other subjects because pupils are not using spelling, punctuation and grammar well enough. Leaders have identified this weakness and have acted, but it is too early to demonstrate impact.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of disadvantaged pupils over time. Leaders have adjusted well to the rise in numbers. Precise plans for the use of pupil premium additional funding have enabled staff to meet pupils' needs effectively. Funding has also been used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils who have emotional barriers to learning get the pastoral support they need.
- Middle leaders are keen to develop their work within their areas of responsibility. They feel supported well by the senior leaders of the school. However, leaders who are new to the role do not have a precise understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject area for which they are responsible. Consequently, there is more to do to ensure that middle leaders are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to

drive improvements in the school.

- The leader of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), supported by the headteacher, ensures that provision for pupils with complex needs enables them to access learning effectively. As a result, pupils with SEND engage with their learning and achieve well.
- Leaders recognise that there is further work to be done with parents and carers at the school to strengthen partnership. Parents report some concerns about the school's leadership and management because of a period of turbulence prior to the headteacher joining the school. Steps have already been taken to make improvements but the impact of this is limited.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide a good balance of challenge and support to senior leaders. They have aligned their monitoring roles with the priorities in the school improvement plan. Consequently, they understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school well.
- The governing body has a good range of expertise among its members, including financial, business and educational experience. Governors make good use of their expertise, particularly when considering the school's finances. As a result, they ensure effective use of school funds.
- Governors play a strategic role in driving improvements in the school alongside senior leaders. They triangulate information from a wide range of sources that include their frequent visits to school, headteacher reports and reports from the multi-academy trust. This information enables them to hold leaders to account effectively.
- Governors execute their safeguarding responsibilities well. Governors' monitoring of the school's performance management system is effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that a culture of vigilance exists that keeps pupils safe. They ensure that all adults who work in the school are thoroughly checked to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.
- Staff receive regular training and updates in safeguarding. As a result, they know how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect. Staff are confident in their understanding of the procedures to report signs of abuse.
- Records demonstrate that leaders take appropriate actions in relation to concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to provide effective support for vulnerable pupils. Leaders persevere when they feel more action is needed.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They say that if they have any worries or concerns, there is always an adult at school to talk to. Pupils are confident about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning across key subjects is good. Staff nurture a positive, inclusive climate for learning in classrooms. This enables pupils to be confident learners who are eager to contribute and give their views. For example, in an observed group discussion, Year 6 pupils thoughtfully suggested that a figure in a picture used as a stimulus for writing was 'mourning someone who has died'.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively to ensure that the needs of pupils are met. They do this, for example, by asking questions that deepen pupils' thinking. Year 1 teaching assistants use their good understanding of phonics to help pupils make good progress in the application of these skills.
- Pupils learn to read well. Pupils from Year 6 who discussed their reading with the inspector talked about the wide selection and choice of reading books, as well as the effective tracking system that ensured that book choices were appropriately challenging for their age. They could talk about their current reading book in depth and explain their choice of book.
- Positive relationships between adults and pupils are a strength of the school. This is due to high expectations and well-established routines. Consequently, incidents of low-level disruption and disengagement are rare.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. This is because teachers' planning is increasingly effective in motivating boys and girls to write well. For example, the opportunities pupils have been given to write about 'Bees' in Year 2 have had a positive effect because this topic appeals equally to boys and girls. Consequently, boys are now making as much progress as girls.
- Some pupils skilled in writing expressively are less skilled in using spelling, punctuation and grammar correctly across subjects. As a result, their writing does not consistently demonstrate accurate use of the technical skills expected for their age.
- Overall, teachers use assessment effectively to review what pupils can do and then plan work which meets pupils' learning needs. This enables pupils to make good progress across their subjects. Sometimes, however, teachers do not use assessment information well enough in mathematics. As a result, a small proportion of lower-ability pupils struggle to reason and explain how they arrived at an answer.
- Teachers are beginning to provide pupils with more opportunities to produce written work in other subjects such as science and history. For example, the opportunity for Year 6 pupils to write an explanation on the digestive system resulted in good-quality work. However, not all teachers have secured the same high standards of writing in other subjects that are evident in English writing books.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen to take on roles and responsibilities in the school. They have a

growing sense of pride in relation to their roles, including being members of the student council.

- Pupils are articulate, confident and positive about their school. There are planned opportunities for pupils to celebrate and display their work with parents and carers, and pupils from key stage 1. As a result, pupils are keen to share their work.
- Leaders and teachers know the pupils well. They make good use of outside agency advice if they feel that pupils would benefit from support, for example for their well-being or behaviour. This work is building parents' confidence that staff are providing appropriate support for pupils. As such, relationships between the school and parents are beginning to strengthen.
- Pupils say they feel safe and secure because there is almost no bullying and they trust the staff to deal with any concerns they have. They gain a good understanding of how to stay safe online and about the potential dangers associated with social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves well and show positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils take care with the presentation of their work. In lessons, pupils are keen to participate and many want to answer teachers' questions.
- Pupils play and work harmoniously together. They are courteous and polite. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and, as a result, pupils respond well to the expectations set for them. Pupils behave well in the breakfast club, where they get off to a good start to the day.
- The level of attendance last year was above the national average. This year, rates of attendance continue at this level and show pupils' eagerness to attend school. Leaders respond to parents with appropriate support and challenge where low attendance is linked to an individual's circumstances.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, pupils' combined attainment for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 dipped to below the national average but progress remained near to the national average. Over time, pupils' outcomes have improved rapidly. In 2018, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics improved to be above the national average.
- Pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Where pupils make slower progress, leaders are aware and put in place effective support to help pupils catch up.
- From their starting points, pupils' attainment at key stage 1 is above the national average at expected standard and close to the national average at the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics. These outcomes are sustained over time.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above the national average for the last two years. Current pupils are also making good progress.

- Pupils with SEND make good progress. Support for pupils, especially those with complex needs, is highly effective.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving over time. Leaders have an accurate understanding of their barriers to learning. Leaders and teachers monitor pupils' progress closely and act swiftly to support pupils who fall behind.
- Historically, boys have not achieved as well as girls in reading and writing. However, the progress of current pupils shows that this gap is diminishing.
- Leaders identified that a small proportion of teaching in mathematics does not currently ensure that lower-ability pupils are suitably challenged to achieve their potential. Steps to replicate the stronger teaching across the school are yet to be implemented.

Early years provision

Good

- The newly appointed Nursery manager and early years teacher, supported by senior leaders, have worked efficiently to provide a stimulating learning environment, both inside and outside. As a result, children are motivated, happy and ready to learn.
- Children enter Reception class with skills broadly typical for their age and stage of development. Adults know the children well and provide support and encouragement. As a result, by the time children leave Reception class, the proportion achieving a good level of development is broadly in line with the national average.
- Teachers skilfully use what they know about children's interests and learning to plan a broad range of activities which excite children. For example, during the inspection, a group of boys were motivated to practise writing words outside, using chalk. A group of reluctant writers used construction blocks to spell their names. Consequently, children are motivated and concentrate well.
- Assessment contributes to the good progress children make because it is used effectively to plan follow-on teaching sessions and activities.
- Children play with imagination and curiosity. In the Reception class, a group of children were observed taking an interest in building stables for their horses. The children worked collaboratively. They listened well to each other, taking turns to describe their stable and name their horse. Consequently, children's social and personal development is good.
- Children behave well. They display a good level of concentration and can sustain their interest in topics. The adults who work with them use effective questioning to make them think more deeply.
- Children's acquisition of early writing skills is good. Their work shows that children's writing develops from simple mark making at the start of the year to writing in sentences using capital letters and full stops more recently.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children in early years is used effectively. Adults have a clear understanding of the children's needs and are beginning to target them effectively. For a few disadvantaged children, further work is needed to ensure that they achieve a good level of development.

- Children have positive relationships with adults and with other children. Teachers ensure that safeguarding is effective and that children behave well. This leads to children who are happy in their setting and who interact well with each other.
- Staff communicate well with parents and carers. They are appreciative of the information they receive about how well their children are doing and what they are learning. Parents and carers contribute well to their child's experience throughout the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	143136
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10088281

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Nigel Daniel
Headteacher	Nina Walker
Telephone number	01934 426 901
Website	stgeorgeschurchool.co.uk
Email address	office@stgeorges.bwmat.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Georges Church School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The school joined the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust in September 2016. The trust consists of 30 primary schools that are clustered into four hubs in North Somerset, Bath, Taunton and South Somerset. Each school has a local governing board which is responsible for budget and management reporting, staff and pay, performance and curriculum, admissions, pupil behaviour and safeguarding.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2018.
- The school has Nursery provision, providing full day, morning and afternoon places.
- Pupils are predominantly from a White British background.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The school has a breakfast club. The provision is managed by the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other key leaders. The lead inspector spoke with two members of the local governing board, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors made visits to classrooms on both days of the inspection to observe pupils' attitudes to learning. Some of these visits were with the headteacher.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide selection of pupils' books from different subjects. This was carried out during visits to classrooms and in a formal work scrutiny.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally. One group of pupils met with an inspector to discuss a range of topics. A number of pupils read to the inspectors.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in classrooms, in corridors and outside on the playground.
- Inspectors attended collective worship and visited the school's breakfast club.
- One inspector talked to parents before school. The lead inspector also considered the 90 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 20 responses to the staff questionnaire issued during the inspection.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, monitoring records and governance meeting minutes. Information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety was also analysed with the headteacher.
- Documents relating to safeguarding were checked and the lead inspector looked at published information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Wendy D'Arcy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Marion Borland

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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