

St George's Hanover Square CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101130
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	323408
Inspection dates	11-12 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Taylor

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 on roll	
School (total)	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Fitzpatrick
Headteacher	Mr Malcolm Lothian
Date of previous school inspection	05 July 2006
School address	South Street London W1K 2XH
Telephone number	020 7629 1196
Fax number	020 7641 4920

Age group	4-11
Inspection Date(s)	11-12 May 2009
Inspection Number	323408

(c) Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The intake of this small school is ethnically diverse. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is not the first language is well above average. A slightly lower than average proportion of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Free school meals entitlement is below average. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving school at times other than the usual times is above average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in Reception. The school has gained the Activemark and the 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: 3

St George's CofE Primary is a satisfactory school with a strong Christian ethos. Staff work well with parents and other agencies to promote pupils' well-being. Parents really appreciate the distinctive character and values of the school that the headteacher has developed over time. Many go to great lengths to choose this school for their children.

Achievement and standards are good. Standards reached at the end of Reception, Years 1 and 2 are improving each year. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average in mathematics and science. They are above average in English. Although pupils' reading skills are very well developed across the school, writing standards are not as high. The school is therefore rightly focused on raising writing standards further by, for example, providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length. This is having a positive impact in some classes, though inspection evidence suggests that more attention should be given to teaching pupils to apply previously learned literacy skills and handwriting skills to their day-to-day written work.

Although pupils' progress is not always consistent across classes, due to variations in the quality of teaching, pupils make good overall progress during their time at the school. Several factors contribute to pupils' good progress, despite the inconsistencies in teaching. These include pupils' inherent capabilities, their good attitudes to learning and their eagerness to do well. The school also tracks individuals' progress carefully and uses the information well to identify those who need further challenge or support, and then provides additional one-to-one or small-group teaching to help these pupils to keep up.

Pupils' personal development, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils also understand how to stay safe and healthy. They develop good social skills, and are polite and friendly. Pupils told inspectors how much they enjoy school and opportunities to get involved in activities such as the choir, the excellent range of out-of-school activities, and after-school clubs. Pupils' well-developed social skills, along with their good basic skills, mean they are well prepared for secondary school by the time they leave.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In classes lower down in the school and in Year 6, teaching is often good, because staff really motivate pupils and have high expectations of their work and efforts. Although there are examples of good teaching in Years 3 to 5, progress is also slow in some lessons. This is because the tasks set do not build sufficiently on what pupils already know and can do. Questioning also does not do enough to challenge pupils' thinking or check their understanding. Marking of pupils' work across the school is variable in quality and is irregular in some classes - a weakness also highlighted by a few parents.

The school provides a good curriculum. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is good. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 promotes the basic skills and pupils' enjoyment and personal development well. It also includes an excellent number and range of after-school activities, visits and visitors to school that develop pupils' interests and their cultural and spiritual development very well. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There are strengths in aspects of pastoral care, and academic guidance is satisfactory and improving.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' work happens more frequently than at the time of the last inspection, and involves subject leaders, as well as senior leaders. However, monitoring is still neither regular nor rigorous enough to identify and address any weaknesses promptly.

Most parents are very happy with the school. Those who spoke to an inspector or wrote comments in the questionnaires expressed their deep appreciation of the contribution the school is making in the children's lives. A noticeable minority of parents, however, also said that they would like to see improvements in some areas, and for the school to seek and respond to their views more readily.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children joining Reception have previously attended a nursery, and enter school with above average attainment. They have a good disposition and attitudes to learning, and particular strengths in some aspects of communication language and literacy. Parents commented on the ease with which their child settled in school, noting, for example, that, 'My child started school in January and has settled extremely quickly. She feels happy, and the school is welcoming and friendly.' Children's personal development is good. Staff provide a warm welcome. They really help children to develop independence, form friendships, take turns, and respect each other's feelings.

Children progress well because of the good teaching. They make particularly good progress in reading and early writing skills. Many have already mastered the skills of applying their phonic knowledge to reading and emergent writing activities. Children speak with confidence, and in many cases show a good knowledge and understanding of the world, often recounting detailed experiences from outside school. They explore minibeasts in the environment with enthusiasm, and talk about their experience of planting seeds outside.

Carefully planned lessons ensure that children receive a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences, including direct teaching of the basic skills, creative activities, and opportunities for playing with construction kits and larger equipment outside. The staff work hard to overcome the limitations of the building, which poses some restrictions on independent activities and lacks immediate access to outdoor learning. Welfare arrangements are good and the children's safety and well-being is emphasised at all times. The new teacher, under the supervision of the deputy headteacher, provides satisfactory leadership. She has made a promising start in making further improvements to provision and day-to-day assessments.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 further by placing more emphasis on teaching pupils how to apply the skills they learn to their future work.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, especially teachers' marking, questioning skills and their ability to plan and deliver lessons that meet the needs of different ability groups.
- Bring greater rigour to the way that leaders monitor and evaluate provision and its impact on pupils' learning and progress, so as to bring about improvements more quickly.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although there is a wide spread of attainment and some year-on-year variations, overall attainment on entry is above average. The improvements to Early Years Foundation Stage provision in recent years ensure that children make good progress across all areas of learning. Standards on entry to Year 1 are therefore rising, and were well above average in 2008.

Pupils' progress during Years 1 and 2 and the standards reached by the end of Year2 have also improved since the last inspection, and are now good. In 2008, reading, writing, and mathematics standards were above average. Pupils currently in Year 2 are set to attain similar standards by the end of this year.

Standards at the end Year 6 have been subject to some year-on-year variations, but usually exceed national standards. In 2008 almost all pupils at least met the challenging targets set for them, and some exceeded them. English standards were above average, and mathematics and science standards were well above average. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly similar to those attained last year, and the school is on course to meet its targets.

Boys and girls, and pupils from minority ethnic groups, attain similar standards. Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well during their time in the school. Pupils who join the school late also progress at a similar rate to other pupils. Pupils' progress across the school is not, however, always consistent, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. At the current time, progress is more rapid in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1, 2 and 6 than elsewhere in the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are friendly and courteous and have good attitudes to learning. Most attend regularly. Racial harmony is good; pupils from very diverse backgrounds play and work well together. Pupils participate in regular physical exercise during lessons, break times, after-school activities and competitive sports. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and to the local and wider communities. For example they regularly contribute to charities, get involved in the church and community events and carry out tasks around the school. Buddies help befriend younger pupils and those arriving new to the school at other times. Through the school council, pupils regularly contribute to the decision-making process. Pupils behave very well in lessons. In less formal situations, for example in the dining hall, playground and when moving around the school, behaviour is on occasions only satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Teaching in this part of the school, and in Year 6, provides a good level of challenge, as is evident from pupils' response in lessons and the quality of their finished work. Although there are examples of good teaching in Years 3 to 5, this is not consistent. The key areas for development here include providing a broader range of questions to develop and check pupils' understanding and learning, and, providing a better match of work that builds on the prior learning for all ability groups.

Some general strengths in teaching across the school include teachers' relationships with pupils, the planning of interesting activities, and staff's good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance teaching and learning across subjects.

Teaching assistants make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning during group work. They are less skilled in supporting pupils during whole-class teacher input. The school recognises that more needs to be done to develop all teachers' and teaching assistants' knowledge of best practice in relation to supporting a minority of pupils who are new to learning English. Additional training has already started.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum promotes enjoyment and meets pupils' interests and academic needs well. It has a strong focus on developing the basic skills. ICT is used well to support work across subjects. A school priority is to develop further links between subjects across the curriculum. It includes some specialist provision for music and physical education which

supports pupils to realise their talents and reach good standards - for example in singing, where the standard is high. The school provides a very good number and range of after-school activities for pupils in all year groups. Pupils are privileged to enjoy an extensive range of visits and visitors to their school. These make an excellent contribution to their enjoyment, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good induction procedures ensure that pupils, including those joining the school late, settle quickly. The school stresses the importance of regular attendance and follows up any unauthorised absences well. Procedures for ensuring health and safety and for vetting staff and safeguarding learners meet government requirements. However, the school was made aware that in a couple of areas procedures need to be reviewed or tightened up. Academic guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory and improving. Increasingly, staff are making effective use of data, pupil-progress targets and pupil-progress conferences to guide pupils towards improving their work. Pupils' involvement in self-assessment and reviewing their own work so as to improve it is as yet underdeveloped.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

School leaders ensure that there is a clear focus on pupils' personal development and well-being and raising standards. They have identified appropriate priorities and set challenging targets for pupils. School development planning has improved. Consequently, actions are now detailed and clearly focused, which helps leaders and governors to more readily check the school's progress towards achieving its goals.

Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory. Although systems are in place to track pupils' termly progress, systems for monitoring pupils' day-to-day work, teaching and learning are not sufficiently robust. The school's lesson observations also lack a sharp focus on evaluating the learning and progress of different ability groups.

Governors are very supportive of the school. They play a key role in helping to challenge the school, and discharge their responsibilities well. Subject and other leaders make a satisfactory contribution to school leadership and are keen to extend their contribution. They appreciate the training and development opportunities offered by the school and local authority.

Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school is inclusive and helps pupils to develop a good appreciation of British beliefs and culture, and to respect different religious beliefs and cultures. It has productive links with the church and the local community, and plans are in place to establish links with a nearby school. Links further afield, both in the wider context of the United Kingdom and beyond, are still at the initial planning stage.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are the children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

01 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St George's Hanover Square CofE Primary School, London, W1K 2XH

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we came to visit your school. We found that St George's provides a satisfactory standard of education. You make good progress. You reach above average standards in English, and well above average standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, and are well prepared for secondary school by the time you leave.

You are good ambassadors for your school. You are polite, usually well behaved, and hard-working. We noticed that you help the school to run smoothly, and get on well together. We also noticed that the staff take you out on lots of interesting trips around London, and bring lots of visitors into school to help make your learning really exciting.

We found that provision in Reception is good. When we visited classes in Years 1 to 6, we noticed that the staff find interesting things for you to do and learn. When we saw you practising for the end-of-term concert, we noticed that you sing very well. We also saw that you really enjoy the sports coaching, which helps you to be fit and healthy. The staff take care of after you, and you told us that they help you if you have any problems.

We have asked your headteacher and other leaders to check your work and learning in lessons more carefully and more often, to help some of you to make better progress. We have asked your teachers to mark some of your work more thoroughly and to help you to improve your writing standards further. You can help by always doing your best.

Yours faithfully

Kathryn Taylor
Lead Inspector