

Inspection of St George's CofE Primary School

Church Lane, New Mills, High Peak, Derbyshire SK22 4NP

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 January, and 14 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The executive headteacher of this school is Sarah Craig. This school is part of Derby Diocesan Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sarah Clark, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sarah Charles. The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

St George's is a kind and nurturing school. Right from the start in early years, pupils are well cared for. Staff warmly welcome pupils into school each day. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), say they feel safe and happy in school. Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and adults. They know the importance of treating everyone equally.

The school has high expectations for its pupils across all aspects of school life. It recognises that this is not consistently reflected in academic achievements. The school's values of 'courage' underpin pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils conduct themselves calmly around the school. They know the school's 'golden rules' and disruption to pupils' learning and misbehaviour at social times are rare. Pupils trust adults to deal with any incidents of misbehaviour quickly and fairly.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities that the school provides for them alongside the academic curriculum. For example, they enjoy sports and arts clubs and positions of leadership, such as health champions and eco councillors. Older pupils speak fondly of the Castleton residential trip and their upcoming performance at the Hallé.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the experience their children have at this school. They rightly praise the school's nurturing ethos.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

It is evident the school has high ambitions for pupils. The newly established leadership team are taking swift and appropriate action to improve outcomes. The school has made considerable changes to the curriculum in recent times to ensure a well-structured curriculum is in place. Staff have identified the key knowledge that pupils must acquire from the early years to Year 6.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain concepts clearly. However, on occasion, what pupils experience and learn does not consistently match the school's ambition. The curriculum is not yet delivered consistently well. In a few subjects, the checks on what pupils know are not as effective as they could be. Consequently, gaps in pupils' knowledge and misconceptions can go unnoticed.

The school prioritises reading. Children start learning about the sounds that letters make as soon as they join the Reception Year. Pupils are given books to read that match the sounds they know. This means they read with increasing fluency. The school swiftly identifies any pupils who have fallen behind and gives carefully targeted support to help them catch up. Pupils develop a strong love of reading through regular reading events such as the pop-up 'poetry café'.

The school is quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Effective liaison with specialist agencies helps ensure that staff know how to support individual needs. In the majority of cases, staff support these pupils well.

The school sets high expectations for behaviour. From early years onwards, staff consistently build effective classroom routines, such as taking turns in the Nursery. As a result, pupils display excellent attitudes towards their learning. They work hard in lessons because the school expects them to achieve well.

Attendance remains a high priority for the school. The school analyses attendance information with rigour. It uses this information effectively. For example, to provide challenge and support to families in overcoming any barriers that they may have in helping their children attend school regularly. Consequently, the small number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about difference and diversity in British society and beyond. For example, pupils explore how Christians celebrate Christmas in Italy, Mexico, Bethlehem and Syria. They learn about different faiths and visit different places of worship as part of the Derby faith trail. Pupils learn about the mill industry and their local heritage through lived experiences, for example visits to Torr Vale Mill. The school offers pupils leadership opportunities, such as becoming play leaders or members of the school council and eco council. These experiences help pupils to prepare for their future lives in modern Britain.

The school is currently developing leadership of the curriculum. However, in some subjects, the school does not have a secure understanding of how well pupils are learning. In these subjects the school does not have the information it needs to make improvements in a timely way.

When making decisions the school carefully considers any impact on staff's workload. Staff value the school's care for their well-being. They are proud to work in this school. The governing body asks pertinent questions to challenge and support the school's work. This helps to ensure that the school continues to fulfil its long-term priorities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, implementation of the curriculum is variable. This means that pupils do not always benefit from the high-quality learning that the school intends. The school should continue to make sure that staff have the necessary skills and expertise to deliver the curriculum well.
- In those subjects where the curriculum is being refined, the school is still shaping its approaches to assessment. This prevents teachers from identifying pupils'

misconceptions and the gaps in their prior learning as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that, as it develops assessment systems in these subjects, teachers are suitably equipped to check that pupils' earlier learning is secure.

- The school does not have as secure an understanding of how well pupils are learning in some subjects compared to others. This means they do not have as full a picture of where to make improvements. The school should ensure they check how well pupils are learning across subjects so they better understand where they might need to make necessary improvements.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	144468
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10324192
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Charles
CEO of the trust	Sarah Clark
Headteacher	Sarah Craig (executive headteacher)
Website	www.st-georgescofe.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 February 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The executive headteacher and head of school both took up post in September 2024. The chair of governors started in their role in September 2023. A new CEO of the trust started in post in May 2023.
- The school offers full time provision to three-year olds.
- There is a breakfast and an after-school club, both of which are run by the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspection started on 7 January 2025. It was paused in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy. Inspectors returned on 14 January 2025 to complete the inspection.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading; mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work where available.
- To explore the wider curriculum, inspectors also discussed the curriculum in two other subject areas with curriculum leaders and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school and staff.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss their views.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with representatives the trust, including the chair of trustees and the CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation on the school website and documentation relating to the governance of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents and records linking to attendance and behaviour, as well as school improvement documentation.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and a consideration of their responses to the online surveys, including the free-text facility in Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Anne Maingay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rob Cruise

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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