

Inspection of St George's CofE Primary School

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

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They know that staff work hard for them and want them to do well. Pupils are keen to learn. As one pupil typically explained, 'Staff try their best, just like us.'

Pupils learn well in some subjects, but not all.

Pupils know that it is important to behave well, and most do. They say that staff deal with poor behaviour consistently and fairly. Most pupils enjoy being rewarded for good conduct and effort. They are confident that staff deal with instances of bullying swiftly. One pupil expressed the views of many by stating, 'I trust staff and have someone to talk to if I'm worried.'

Pupils respect each other and adults. When somebody new joins the school, pupils say they are accepted as individuals. Pupils value opportunities to broaden their horizons, for example by finding out about different jobs. The '11 things to do before 11' initiative encourages them to try out new activities.

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

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They have focused on the right things to improve the quality of education. However, it is not yet good enough in some subjects.

Some subjects are well established. In mathematics and English, leaders have made sure that the curriculum is well planned. They have thought carefully about what pupils need to learn and when. Teachers use appropriate resources in these subjects to help pupils secure new knowledge.

In other subjects, including history, and design and technology, curriculum planning is less well thought out. Leaders have not identified exactly what they want pupils to know. They have not made sure that pupils learn new things in a logical order. Teachers do not take the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes into account well enough when planning learning. Pupils are not able to recall what they have learned previously with confidence. They make spelling mistakes in their written work that are often left uncorrected.

Teachers have received appropriate training in the new approach to teaching phonics. They know exactly what sounds pupils should know and by when. Phonics is taught consistently well. Children start to learn letters and sounds as soon as they join the early years. Well-matched reading books help pupils practise the sounds they have learned. Extra phonics sessions each day help pupils who have fallen behind to catch up. Staff encourage a love of reading by frequently sharing stories and poems. Older pupils always have a reading book readily to hand. They choose these books from the school's well-stocked library. Pupils love 'tasting' new books at

the book café and recommending books they have read to others during 'book wars' discussions.

Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the help they need. Most teachers support these pupils appropriately so that they can achieve.

In the early years, staff focus closely on developing children's speech and language. They encourage children to share their ideas and improve their vocabulary. The curriculum is well planned. Children enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities that capture their interests. Relationships between children and adults are positive. Children enjoy working together and readily share activities. Leaders make sure that children are well prepared when they move to Year 1.

Most pupils attend school well. However, a small minority of pupils are often absent. Leaders' work to improve the attendance of these pupils is beginning to have a positive impact.

Pupils understand important British values such as democracy, and mutual respect and tolerance. They learn how to stay physically and mentally fit. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils enjoy participating in extra-curricular activities. Parents and carers are positive about their children's experiences of the school.

Staff feel well supported. They say that senior leaders carefully consider their well-being and workload. Governors new to post bring experience and a wide set of skills. They have quickly gained an understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. The trust provides significant and ongoing support to the school as it continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. They have had appropriate training. They inform leaders quickly when they are concerned that a pupil is at risk of harm.

Leaders are knowledgeable. They take appropriate and prompt action to keep pupils safe. They seek help from external agencies if necessary to get pupils the right support. Leaders keep detailed records of the actions they take.

Pupils feel safe in school and well looked after. They know that staff will listen if they are worried about something.

Those responsible for governance have a detailed understanding of safeguarding. They realise that any threat to pupils' safety 'could happen here'.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In core subjects, leaders have identified clearly what pupils need to know and when. However, this level of detail is lacking in the foundation subjects. In these subjects, leaders have not identified exactly what pupils need to know. Pupils' learning does not build well enough on what they have learned previously. Leaders must ensure that the curriculums for foundation subjects are planned and sequenced precisely, and that teachers deliver the curriculums in these subjects well.
- Some leaders of foundation subjects do not have a precise-enough understanding of what is working well in their area of responsibility and what needs to improve. Leaders need to ensure that these subject leaders have the right training and support to be able to lead their areas of responsibility and be effective in their roles.
- Teachers do not consider the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes carefully enough when planning learning. For some pupils in these classes, the work is not sufficiently demanding, while other pupils need extra help to access the curriculum. Leaders should make sure that the curriculum is appropriately ambitious for pupils in mixed-age classes.
- Teachers do not have consistent expectations about the accuracy of pupils' spellings. Some pupils regularly spell words incorrectly in their written work. Teachers do not take a consistent approach to correcting these mistakes. Leaders should ensure that teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' written communication are consistently high.
- Many pupils attend well. Some pupils are persistently absent, including disadvantaged pupils and some pupils with SEND. Leaders should work closely with parents to ensure that all pupils attend regularly.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

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.

School details

Unique reference number	144468
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10212024
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	113
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Ford
Headteacher	Lynne Kilford (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.st-georgescofe.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust in September 2017.
- The executive headteacher started to work with school leaders in October 2021. In January 2022, her role became permanent.
- The chair of governors took up the position in January 2022. Two other governors joined the school's governing body at this time.
- A section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place on 22 September 2016.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees and representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. She spoke with the chief executive officer and the deputy chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, history, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers of the lessons visited, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with curriculum leaders and reviewed pupils' workbooks in a wider range of subjects. Inspectors listened to some pupils read with a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stage 2. They spoke with pupils informally and observed the behaviour of pupils during social times.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks, holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils and reviewing documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They took note of the results of the Ofsted staff survey and the Ofsted pupil survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. They considered information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and exclusions, and the wider curriculum.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Liz Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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