

Inspection of a good school: St George's Community Primary School

Clarence Road, Portland, Dorset DT5 2BD

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 October 2021

Outcome

St George's Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's motto of 'Inspire, Believe, Achieve' sums up St George's Primary School. Pupils are inspired by interesting and captivating lessons. Staff believe in every pupil. Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The headteacher and her staff have very clear and high expectations. Pupils respond positively. They behave well. They are polite and well mannered. They challenge themselves and they work hard.

Staff and governors have a shared vision that the school is at the heart of the community on the island. They are ambitious for pupils to have a good knowledge of Portland, as well as being prepared for adult life in the wider world. Staff know pupils and their families well. Pupils say they are well cared for. Bullying is very rare. If it does occur, adults deal with it quickly.

Pupils are proud of their school. They have many happy memories of the things they have learned. They say that their school is amazing. It makes them 'smarter' and 'more responsible'. Parents are happy with the school.

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

High expectations, a consistent approach and clear curriculum plans underpin the strong quality of education at St George's.

From when children first arrive, teachers expect pupils to behave, to try hard, to challenge themselves and to persevere. This means that pupils develop important knowledge and skills through the school. They are ready for the next stage of their education.

Teachers are ambitious for all pupils to develop a love of reading. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they arrive in the early years. There is a clear structure of how sounds are introduced. Skilful adults read regularly with children. They choose books carefully so that pupils practise their new sounds and develop confidence. Teachers keep careful track of how well pupils are learning. If a pupil needs more help, this is provided quickly. Pupils with SEND receive sensitive and precise help with their reading that links with their other needs. Pupils become confident readers. Teachers provide a wide variety of different texts to encourage pupils successfully. They also emphasise the enjoyment of reading through regular story times.

Pupils say they love mathematics. They enjoy challenging themselves. Teachers have a shared understanding of the priority of mathematics in the school. They use a range of different approaches depending on what must be learned and the age or needs of the pupils. Teachers are constantly checking to make sure pupils have understood. They make time to go over things so that pupils become confident and do not have gaps in their learning.

Pupils enjoy the interesting work that teachers plan for them. Teachers are determined that activities are stimulating and captivating. They link areas of the curriculum to educational visits, assemblies and theme weeks to bring subjects alive. However, the range of activities does not always support pupils to secure key subject knowledge systematically over time.

Everyone works hard to encourage pupils to grow and learn with strong values and good behaviour. Conduct in lessons is exemplary. Pupils treat each other with respect, playing and working together well. They enjoy the richness of activities and clubs on offer. Pupils enjoy a range of sports, learn musical instruments, study handicraft and learn outside. Pupils remember highlights from their own experiences and look forward to what is planned, for example the Year 6 camp.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong leadership to the school. They ensure that high standards are maintained every day. They make sure that systems, such as assessment, are meaningful and used well. Middle leaders are reflective, knowledgeable and ambitious for their subject. Staff's morale is high. Staff appreciate that their well-being and workload are taken seriously by leaders and governors.

Governors are very committed to this community school. Some attended the school, have had children and grandchildren attend. They are supportive and challenging. They prioritise protecting the special family atmosphere of the school, as well as being ambitious and forward thinking.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' deep knowledge of the community and its families provides the foundation of the work to keep children safe.

Staff receive regular training. There are clear procedures in place. These work well. There is very effective work with outside agencies who praise the 'can-do' approach of the school.

Leaders plan opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils say they feel safe and their parents agree.

All the necessary checks are made when appointing adults to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The topics taught in different year groups do not contribute to pupils acquiring key knowledge and skills in the foundation subjects consistently over time. Leaders should improve the intent of these subjects in line with their ambitions. They should clarify the rationale for the programme of learning and how it is relevant for the pupils of St George's. Leaders should determine what pupils should know, understand and achieve in the different subjects by the time they leave. They should then strengthen the curriculum and assessments to meet these expectations.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged St George's Community Primary School to be good in April 2016.

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	127133
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10199699
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lisa Vbranch-Wellman
Headteacher	Josephine Luxon
Website	www.stgeorgesportland.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 and 13 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider of education.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders, and has taken that into account in his evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle and subjects leaders, the chair and members of the local governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and teachers, looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read to adults.
- The inspector checked procedures used to keep pupils safe. He reviewed the checks carried out by leaders on the suitability of adults who work in the school.

- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the school day. He considered 44 responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online questionnaire, and 38 free-text responses. He considered the responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Stephen McShane, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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