

# St George's Roman Catholic Primary School, York

1 Winterscale Street, Fishergate, York, North Yorkshire YO10 4BT

## Inspection dates

20–21 February 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher leads by example. She sets exceptionally high standards for pupils' achievement to be the very best it can be.
- Senior leaders are very effective in supporting the headteacher to make the changes needed to improve the school's effectiveness.
- Governors know the school well. They are highly skilled and provide an effective balance of challenge and support for the leadership team.
- Action plans for improvement are comprehensive regarding the actions that are being taken to improve pupils' outcomes. However, the targets within them are not sharply focused to enable the impact of actions to be evaluated with precision.
- Leaders place pupils' well-being at the centre of the school's aims and ethos. They consistently ensure that all pupils, and particularly vulnerable pupils and those at risk of harm, are kept safe.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are proud members of St George's Roman Catholic Primary School and welcome the opportunities afforded them.
- Assessment is now accurate and is supporting the rapid improvement in pupils' outcomes. All teachers regularly assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and build on these by planning interesting lessons which successfully build on pupils' previous learning.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 who achieved the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics improved markedly.
- The proportions of pupils reaching the higher standard at the end of key stage 2 were below national averages in reading and writing. No disadvantaged pupils reached the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improvements to pupils' outcomes in foundation subjects such as history and geography are not as strong as those in English and mathematics.
- Subject leaders are recently appointed. They are enthusiastic and keen to be involved. However, they are too new in their roles to have influenced pupils' outcomes in the subjects they lead.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon the improvements in pupils' achievement, so that:
  - more pupils are able to reach the higher standard in key stages 1 and 2 and to exceed a good level of development at the end of Reception
  - the differences between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and others diminish further, especially at the higher standard
  - pupils' outcomes in foundation subjects match those in English and mathematics.
- Strengthen leadership further by:
  - providing training and support for the newly appointed subject leaders for foundation subjects, to enable them to extend their responsibilities into monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school
  - ensuring that action plans are linked sharply to the gains in pupils' outcomes that leaders desire, particularly for the most able pupils and disadvantaged most-able pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has brought about rapid improvement and established high expectations for pupils' outcomes and well-being. She has a very clear vision for the school and is utterly committed to ensuring that all pupils will 'be the best they can be'. This has led to a school that is improving at a pace, because of the highly effective leadership of teaching, management of performance and the detailed programme of professional development opportunities.
- A strong senior leadership team very ably supports the headteacher. Together they make a highly cohesive team, have a very clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and are quick to identify weaknesses. This is because their ongoing monitoring and weekly pupils' progress meetings are thorough and precise in holding staff to account for their pupils' learning.
- The leaders of mathematics and English have successfully taken responsibility for tackling the underperformance seen in the results of the 2016 tests at both key stage 1 and 2. They have made considerable changes to the way in which reading, writing and mathematics are taught and have been highly effective in improving outcomes in 2017.
- Subject leaders beyond English and mathematics are new to their role. They are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and keen to play a fuller part in leading whole-school improvement. While they have received some training, their role in monitoring is not sufficiently developed for them to have secured the significant improvements in pupils' outcomes seen in English and mathematics. Senior leaders acknowledge that this is an area of leadership that requires further improvement.
- Leaders have successfully secured the accurate assessment of pupils' achievement and have improved the school's systems for recording this achievement effectively. Leaders are now able to access many layers of detailed information on individual pupils' and groups of pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders analyse this data thoroughly and take appropriate actions to tackle pupils' underachievement. However, they do not use this information to sharply focus their action plans, resulting in targets and actions that are too broad to evaluate effectively.
- The curriculum provides rich opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The programme of religious education is particularly effective in enabling pupils to broaden their knowledge of the main religions of the world and in nurturing respect for all faiths and cultures. Pupils explore relevant topics such as extremism and homophobia, which encourages them to be considerate and measured in their views and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority provides effective support to the school and has supported the headteacher in securing some of the recent improvements.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to subsidise extra-curricular activities, additional support and musical tuition to extend disadvantaged pupils' skills and interests. Leaders acknowledge that, in the past, the funding was not targeted sufficiently upon diminishing the differences in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils

and their peers. As a result, there remain gaps in disadvantaged pupils' achievement, particularly at the higher standard, that, leaders acknowledge, needs to diminish further.

- The primary physical education and sport premium is used very effectively to increase pupils' participation in, and enjoyment of, physical activity. There are now lots of opportunities for pupils to be involved in competition and to participate in a wide range of sporting activities.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is spent wisely. Highly effective relationships with external advisory staff and detailed and timely assessments ensure that pupils' needs are identified early and their needs met. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress from their varied starting points.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to other parents.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are well informed and highly skilled. They are fully committed to the drive for excellence and support the headteacher's aspirations for encouraging all pupils to be the best they can be. Their secure grasp of the school's performance, coupled with their regular presence within the school, enables them to challenge and support leaders in equal measure.
- Governors show due diligence towards securing the financial stability of the school. School activity is carefully risk-assessed to ensure that all decision-making is prioritised appropriately. This aspect of governance is exceptionally well organised and well considered.
- Dedicated governors with responsibility for safeguarding and health and safety complete regular checks upon school procedures to ensure that school processes to keep pupils safe are effective.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. All staff understand the role they play in keeping children safe. They undertake regular training to ensure that their knowledge is relevant and up to date.
- Staff know the pupils exceptionally well. They have a heightened awareness in spotting any factors that may affect pupils' emotional well-being or learning. A weekly 'niggle' meeting ensures that leaders consolidate their thinking effectively and any changes in pupils' behaviour, or concerning patterns of behaviour, are quickly spotted and appropriate actions taken.
- Leaders ensure that suitable checks are made on all staff employed to work with children and records are suitably detailed, following statutory guidance.

- Vulnerable pupils and their families are well supported and detailed records are kept, which log leaders' actions. Such actions indicate the rigour with which leaders undertake their duties in keeping children safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use resources effectively to support pupils in acquiring new knowledge and consolidating their skills.
- Careful questioning enables staff to assess pupils' understanding and clarify pupils' thinking.
- Assistant teachers have good relationships with pupils and provide extra support to secure pupils' good progress. They work well with teachers and are deployed effectively to support individual pupils' or groups of pupils' learning.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Leaders have introduced a number of initiatives to provide additional reading resources and to promote a love of reading with both pupils and their families. Daily reading sessions, 'Everyone Reading in Class', are encouraging pupils to share the books they have read and to read books by familiar authors. Although outcomes improved in 2017, leaders acknowledge that there is more to do to ensure that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are able to achieve at the higher standard more consistently.
- Over the course of the last academic year, the teaching of writing has improved. Teachers display good subject knowledge and look for interesting ways to give pupils a purpose for writing. Leaders recognised that pupils' writing outcomes, in the past, were markedly below national averages. Having analysed pupils' writing thoroughly, they recognised the need to promote pupils' technical skills. The improved emphasis on grammar and punctuation led to improvements in pupils' writing outcomes and also improvements in pupils' English spelling, grammar and punctuation tests in 2017. There is more to do to secure pupils', including disadvantaged pupils', skills for writing confidently at the higher standard.
- Pupils receive many opportunities to consolidate their writing skills and apply a range of writing styles when studying subjects across the curriculum. However, this is at the expense of developing subject-specific skills. For example, evidence seen for pupils' achievement in history comprised a heavy weighting of additional writing activities using an historical context.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving strongly. Teachers use a range of resources to develop pupils' mathematic skills and concepts. There is now a greater emphasis on developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills alongside securing pupils' arithmetic skills. 'Times table – University Challenge' is encouraging pupils to learn their multiplication facts, which is supporting pupils' improving arithmetic skills. While this is encouraging, there is more to do to ensure that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are challenged routinely to extend their thinking and sustain the improvements seen in outcomes for 2017.
- The teaching of religious education is particularly strong. Pupils are expected to grapple with difficult issues and explore contemporary moral or ethical issues. For

example, older pupils were asked to consider 'is it ever acceptable to steal from someone?' Pupils' responses reflected their growing maturity, consideration of others and their understanding of right and wrong.

- While there is some highly effective teaching in the school, leaders acknowledge that further improvements are required to ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged to deepen their knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. At times, some pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged most able pupils, receive work that is too easy, before moving on to more demanding work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are proud to be at St George's and they demonstrate great pride in their work and in their appearance.
- Pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to their learning and to each other. Pupils show high levels of concentration and engagement. They are happy to talk about their learning and are highly collaborative in supporting each other to be successful.
- Pupils are friendly and thrive on the diversity within the school community. They are most welcoming to those pupils new to the school. They appreciate each other's different views and beliefs. Pupils embody the strong Christian ethos of valuing everyone for who they are and what they can be. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- There is a strong focus upon pupils' pastoral care. The school keeps a close eye on pupils' emotional and physical well-being. Pupils receive additional support and much kindness when coping with difficult periods in their life.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and are particularly confident in explaining how to keep themselves safe on the internet. They have an excellent understanding of all forms of bullying and are confident that, should anything untoward occur, there is a trusted adult in whom they can confide. A small minority of parents raised concerns over the school's handling of bullying allegations. However, inspection findings showed that leaders' actions in respect of any concerns are sensitive and meticulous in their resolve.
- Attendance is improving. Historically, although pupils' rates of absence were higher than the national average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, there were justifiable reasons beyond the school's influence. Despite this, leaders are not complacent and have put rigorous procedures in place to tackle pupils' absence. Such procedures are triggered swiftly at the first sign of absenteeism. While it is too early to measure the full impact of leaders' actions, the early signs are encouraging and show an improvement in attendance rates when compared to the same time last year.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are intrinsically motivated to behave well. This is because of the implicit expectation, from all adults, that pupils will respect each other and behave well.
- Playtimes are harmonious. Pupils play well together and care deeply for one another. Older pupils act as good role models for younger pupils. As 'Flutterby Friends' they look after those pupils recently arrived, and/or those pupils who are going through difficult times.
- Pupils are extremely polite and conduct themselves well in and around the school. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that pupils behave well all of the time.
- Staff have exceptionally high expectations of how pupils should behave and are consistent in their management of pupils' behaviour. School records confirm that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and when an incident does occur, leaders apply the behaviour policy sensitively and consistently.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Historically, pupils' outcomes have been variable and, in 2016, they were below the national averages at the end of key stages 1 and 2. This left a legacy of underachievement that leaders are continuing to tackle.
- Improved assessment processes and a detailed tracking system show that progress for those pupils currently in the school is improving rapidly. Weekly pupil-progress meetings are opportunities for leaders to closely examine which pupils are in need of additional support and intervention. Such actions have halted the decline in pupils' outcomes and brought about the improvements seen in the 2017 test results for key stages 1 and 2. These improvements are evident in the school's assessment information for pupils currently in the school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their varied starting points. Leaders pinpoint the next steps for improvement accurately and ensure that pupils receive highly focused and effective support swiftly.
- Over the past two years, no disadvantaged pupils have achieved at the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils' progress was below the expected rate of progress. While there are relatively smaller proportions of disadvantaged pupils in the school than found nationally, leaders acknowledge that previous support did not focus sufficiently upon diminishing the difference between their progress and that of others. This is no longer the case. Disadvantaged pupils' progress is now beginning to accelerate. Leaders know that such improvements need to be sustained, so that more disadvantaged pupils can achieve at the higher standard successfully.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language enter school with a wide range of skills. Some are in the earliest stages of learning English. As a result of focused interventions, they make good progress from their starting points, and quickly acquire

the skills needed to be successful.

- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make no less than expected progress, but opportunities for them to deepen their understanding and to focus their skills to grapple with challenging activities are not yet fully embedded. As a result, the proportion of pupils across the school achieving at the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics is variable and pupils' outcomes in the end of Year 6 statutory tests were below the national average in reading and writing.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader, although only very recently appointed, has successfully led improvements to provide opportunities for children to learn well across the curriculum.
- Children join the Nursery demonstrating a variety of skills. The majority of pupils enter school with skills typically expected for their age in the prime areas of learning, but with skills below those typically expected in the specific areas of learning, particularly related to reading and writing. By the time pupils leave Reception class, the proportion of pupils who reach a good level of development is above the national average. This demonstrates good progress from children's starting points.
- Currently, children in the Nursery and Reception classes are taught together within the same unit. The headteacher has been influential in securing additional funding to extend the school and build a separate Nursery class. While the needs of children are met effectively under the current arrangements, leaders acknowledge that separate provision will enable staff to focus upon extending children's knowledge and skills, so that even more children can exceed a good level of development.
- Outdoor provision is improving and there are increasing opportunities for pupils to explore and be curious about the world around them. During the inspection, children were observed enthusiastically planting seeds and discussing how they might grow.
- Children behave well. They play cooperatively together and are happy to take turns and share. They are encouraged to look after their environment. The tidy-up time routine is particularly well established and adults' expectations are high.
- Adult use children's interests effectively to provide highly engaging activities that support children's negotiating and problem-solving skills. For example, a group of boys were especially interested in camp building, which was skilfully adapted to a 'ninja tunnel'. Strong winds were threatening the security of the camp, so the boys worked together to collect pegs to hold the cover in place!



## School details

Unique reference number	121647
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10042225

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marika Gatt
Headteacher	Deirdre Patton-Statham
Telephone number	01904 552440
Website	<a href="http://www.stgeorgesrc-york.org.uk">www.stgeorgesrc-york.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:stgeorges.primary@york.gov.uk">stgeorges.primary@york.gov.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	2–3 April 2014

## Information about this school

- Pupil numbers are growing, but the school remains smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers have been appointed.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- Almost a quarter of the school's pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. This is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, or who have an education and health care plan, is below the national average.
- The early years comprises a Nursery and Reception class. A purpose-built, separate Nursery class is due to open and offer full-time nursery provision this term.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of learning, covering all classes in the school. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors during these observations.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders. Inspectors also met seven members of the governing body. A telephone discussion was had with a representative of the local authority.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, at playtimes and lunchtimes and around the school site. Inspectors talked with pupils about their learning both formally and informally and listened to them read.
- Inspectors talked to parents at the end of the school day as well as taking account of the 65 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 62 free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors looked at the school's documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Diane Buckle, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ian Clennan

Ofsted Inspector

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