

Stoberry Park School

North Road, Wells, BA5 2TJ

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- While pupils at the end of Year 6 reach standards that are in line with national expectations, too few pupils make good progress, especially in writing.
- The quality of teaching over time is inconsistent and there is not enough good teaching, especially in Years 3 and 4, to make sure that all pupils consistently make the progress they could.
- Marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is too adult led, children do not have enough opportunities to make choices and extend their own learning.
- Leaders and governors do not use information well enough to know what progress they are making towards their targets for improvement or to link the quality of teaching to pupil progress.
- The school does not always provide parents with the information they need to be more actively involved in supporting their children's learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in Key Stage 1 and Years 5 and 6 is stronger and more effective.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 are improving, particularly in reading, because the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective and pupils make rapid progress in early reading skills.
- Pupils behave consistently well in and out of classrooms. Pupils are sensible, polite and show good attitudes to learning. They feel safe in school.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and made a number of other short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, representatives of the governing body, and an officer from the local authority accompanied by the National Leader of Education currently working with the school.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, looked at safeguarding arrangements as well as other information including policies, procedures, school development plans and self-evaluation, external evaluations and a range of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors took account of 63 responses to the on-line Parent View survey, as well as other verbal and written responses from parents and carers.
- Inspectors also examined questionnaire responses from 33 members of staff.

Inspection team

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Payne	Additional Inspector
Colin Lee	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stoberry Park School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The school is organised in two Reception classes, three mixed Year 1 and Year 2 classes, three mixed Year 3 and Year 4 classes and three mixed Year 5 and Year 6 classes.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (extra funding to support pupils eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those children from service families) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average.
- A small number of pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- No pupils are taught in alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club and a preschool on the school site; these are not managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in the Reception classes and in Years 3 and 4, to good or better to ensure pupils make consistently good or better progress, especially in writing, by:
 - ensuring marking always includes points for improvement and pupils are given opportunities to respond to teachers' marking
 - ensuring pupils fully understand their learning in all lessons and can judge when their learning is successful
 - improving the balance of activities that are led by adults and those that children choose for themselves in the Reception classes.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - checking up on the school's plans for improvement more rigorously
 - checking up more closely on the impact of the quality of teaching on the progress and outcomes for all pupils
 - improving governors' understanding of how the governors check up on the progress of all pupils
 - providing parents with information about their children's progress, more often, so that they can better support them in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement over time requires improvement because, although standards are average by the end of Year 6, not enough pupils make good progress.
- Current achievement requires improvement. This is supported by the school's data on pupils' progress, work in pupils' books and inspection findings.
- Most year groups enter the Reception classes with the knowledge and skills similar to those typically expected for their age. Most make the progress expected by the time they enter Year 1.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading.
- Achievement in writing is weaker than in reading and mathematics because, while steps are being taken to improve standards in writing, there are inconsistencies in the amount and quality of the writing that pupils produce and they are not given enough opportunities to write at length and in other subjects. In some classes, pupils' progress in writing is being impeded by the use of too many worksheets.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving. Pupils are now acquiring and using the main methods of calculation competently. However, they do not have enough opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills in mathematics or in other subjects.
- Progress in reading is more consistent across the school. Pupils make good progress in their early reading because the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective. Older pupils have a wide range of books in school and enjoy reading. The best readers are fluent and read with expression. They are developing opinions about favourite types of books and authors. Less confident readers are supported in small group and individual sessions for phonics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the progress typically expected for this group in English, but below that expected in mathematics.
- Recent action has been taken to raise the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. The gap between the average point scores for these pupils and other pupils in the school at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012 was 5.2 in English and 3.5 in mathematics. Current school tracking data show good progress for current pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and that the gap is closing in Key Stage 2.
- The small number of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language attain as well as other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress. Teaching is improving but there is not enough good or better teaching and some weaknesses in practice remain, especially in Years 3 and 4 and in the Reception classes.
- Children's learning in the Reception classes is too heavily teacher directed and children are not given sufficient opportunities or resources to be active and to explore and extend their own learning. Children are often kept too long on the carpet and sitting at tables during sessions on phonics, reading and handwriting.
- In weaker lessons, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough and there is confusion between the purpose of the lesson, the work children are asked to do and how they will know if they have succeeded. The school has recently introduced 'learning journeys' across Key Stage 1 and 2. These show pupils, at the beginning of each lesson, how the learning within a unit of work fits together. However, these are sometimes focused on what pupils are doing rather than learning. When this is the case, pupils do not make the progress in their learning that they should.

- Where teaching is best lessons have a clear purpose and teachers share the 'learning journey', its purpose and how pupils can be successful learners effectively with the class. As a result, pupils know what they are expected to learn and can judge when they have succeeded.
- Where teaching is good, especially in Key Stage 1 and Years 5 and 6, pupils are actively engaged and make good progress. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils made good progress because the teacher linked the lesson to prior learning and pupils used their knowledge, skills and understanding to solve problems. The teacher checked pupils' understanding throughout the lesson and adjusted expectations and challenge where needed.
- Most teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide useful feedback. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to respond to the teachers' comments. Pupils know their individual targets and can describe what they need to do to improve their work and meet their targets.
- The teaching of reading, especially at Key Stage 1, has improved since the last inspection. The introduction of a commercial programme and the increased emphasis on the teaching of phonics lead to pupils making rapid progress in their early reading skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants in class. They also receive good one-to-one or small-group support from knowledgeable and experienced teaching assistants for both English and mathematics.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding also receive additional small group and one-to-one support for reading and writing and mathematics from an additional teacher and teaching assistants and this contributes to the narrowing of the gap in their achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons. They work readily in pairs and groups and support one another in their learning.
- Behaviour around the school is generally good. Pupil mediators are trained by staff and are 'on duty' in both school playgrounds at playtime and lunchtime. Mediators are very proud of their roles.
- School records of incidents are not centralised, but procedures and support for the minority of pupils with behavioural difficulties are well documented and appropriately dealt with, including appropriate support from outside agencies.
- Pupils have a good understanding of safety and say they feel safe in school. They understand the forms that bullying can take, including cyber bullying, and although they say bullying is rare are confident of who to go to and that things would be dealt with should they have a problem.
- Relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils are positive.
- The school council is very active and proud of its many achievements, including fundraising and producing a high-quality induction booklet for pupils new to the school.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection, and is now above average overall, with persistent absence reduced.
- Children in the Reception classes make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although there have been improvements since the last inspection, the rate of improvement has not been fast enough to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better and all groups of pupils achieve well.
- However, where the school identified teaching as inadequate, senior leaders have taken action to eradicate this. Senior leaders are now focused on ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better in all classes and the school has the capacity to improve.
- Senior leaders hold regular meetings with teachers to discuss pupils' achievement and organise additional support, including links with outside agencies, for those pupils who are not making

expected progress. Performance management outcomes are linked with staff training, promotion and increases in pay.

- Attention is given to checking whether pupils are making the nationally expected rate of progress over each key stage. However, senior leaders do not use achievement information well enough to check on the numbers of pupils who are making good progress and to make certain that all pupils are achieving well. As a result, leaders do not have a complete picture of how well pupils are achieving, or use achievement information rigorously enough to identify aspects of teaching that could be improved overall and for individual teachers.
- Recent plans for improvement show what the school is intending to do to improve, but these plans do not have enough detail of any predicted improvements to pupils' progress, especially for different groups, to give rigorous evidence of the effectiveness of the school's actions.
- The school has various ways to encourage parents to be involved in the work of the school, such as Inspire Days when parents are invited into school to learn with the children, The Circle of Friends (parents association) and the recently formed Parent Forum. However, parents who gave their views through Parent View and letters to the inspectors expressed concerns about the information they receive about their children's progress and how well the school responds to their concerns. Inspectors have asked the school to address these concerns from parents.
- The current curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of enrichment activities, such as after-school clubs, educational visits and residential trips in Year 4 and Year 6. The school is currently introducing a revised curriculum in order ensure pupils' skills are developed successfully and to improve links between subjects.
- Pupil premium funding finances the employment of additional teaching and teaching assistant time, as well as additional resources for reading and writing. Current school tracking data show that additional one-to-one and small-group support is accelerating progress for pupils who are eligible.
- The school is committed to equal opportunities and discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
- The local authority has commissioned support for the school from a National Leader of Education who has been working with the school. This support will continue. The school also works collaboratively with other schools in the Wells Community Learning Partnership.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly committed and is diligent in its management of finances and resources. The governors have recently reorganised their work in order to be more effective and they visit the school regularly. They have attended training and have the necessary skills and experience to fulfil their statutory duties, including with regard to safeguarding. The governing body and school leaders make decisions about linking pay to teachers' performance, and how to allocate funding, such as the pupil premium. The governors' understanding of the impact of this funding is informed by the headteacher's reports to governors. The governing body has a good general understanding of pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 and how this compares with achievement nationally. However, governors are not providing sufficient challenge to the school in relation to the achievement of children in Reception and for pupils in Years 3 and 4.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	132227
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	406486

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Allan Jamieson
Headteacher	Michael Hawkins
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 November 2010
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