

Stonesfield School

High Street, Stonesfield, Witney, OX29 8PU

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Attainment in English and mathematics improved considerably in 2012. Current levels of attainment in English and mathematics are above the national average.
- Most pupils, including those disabled or with special educational needs, make good progress.
- The school is a caring, supportive community. Everyone shares a deep commitment to the school. Attendance is above average. Pupils feel safe and behave well. Relationships are good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is strong. Effective management of teachers' performance has successfully addressed past weaknesses in teaching.
- The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support to the school. The governors' involvement in monitoring the work of the school has increased their effectiveness.
- The special educational needs coordinator has been particularly effective in identifying pupils with particular learning needs. She organises a good range of interventions and support which are carefully monitored to enable these pupils to make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in writing is less strong than in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils do not always have the chance to extend their writing skills in English lessons and in other subjects.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting, spelling and presentation does not always show high enough expectations.
- Although teaching is good, opportunities are missed to use effective questioning and adjust activities to accelerate pupils' progress during lessons.
- Not all marking and feedback provide clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Pupils' independence in learning is limited because pupils do not have a clear understanding of the steps they need to take to reach the next level of attainment.

Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty's Inspector observed teaching in all classes jointly with the headteacher. Eleven lessons taught by eight teachers were observed. A Key Stage 1 assembly was also observed.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, the special educational needs coordinator, and the English and mathematics subject leaders. Her Majesty's Inspector also had a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work, heard pupils read and scrutinised their work.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents including strategic plans, safeguarding arrangements, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes of the governing body's meetings, external monitoring reports, assessment data and curriculum plans.
- The views of parents were taken into account through the 55 responses to the on-line Parent View survey.
- Staff views were taken into consideration through scrutiny of questionnaires completed by 18 staff members.

Inspection team

Ann Henderson, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school with seven classes. Pupils are taught in single-age classes. There is one Reception class and one class for each year group.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average as is the proportion of pupils who speaks English as an additional language or at the early stages of speaking English when they join the school.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, are below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding, which in this school provides additional government funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is well below the national average.
- Since the previous inspection the acting headteacher has been permanently appointed to the post of substantive headteacher. The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve progress and raise attainment in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length during English lessons and in other subjects
 - raising expectations even further to ensure pupils' handwriting, spelling and presentation are consistently of high quality.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - developing pupils' independence through the effective use of targets to enable pupils to know the level they are working at, and provide guidance and opportunities in lessons for pupils to improve their work
 - ensuring marking and feedback to pupils consistently provide next steps in learning
 - continually checking on pupils' progress during lessons and, through effective questioning and adjusting tasks, providing further challenge to accelerate their progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children begin school in the Reception class with skills and abilities that are broadly in line with those found nationally. They make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning when they enter Year 1.
- Achievement by the end of Year 2 has been consistently above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2011, there was a significant dip in attainment and poor progress for Year 6 pupils, particularly in mathematics. The school successfully addressed this issue so that by the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012 pupils reached above average levels in English and mathematics. One pupil achieved the highest level in mathematics.
- Current achievement as seen in the school's own records, observations of learning during the inspection and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that almost all pupils make expected progress and many make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who fall behind in their learning are identified quickly. Targeted programmes of support are put in place to enable these pupils to catch up. Disabled pupils, pupils in receipt of additional government funding and those with special educational needs receive the support they need to make good progress. The school has been particularly successful in enabling pupils to make rapid progress during short intervention programmes.
- Improving writing is a focus for the school. Although most pupils make expected progress, the variability in the quality and quantity of written work over time is preventing some pupils achieving higher levels in writing. Incorrect punctuation and spelling, along with inconsistent joining of letters for handwriting, are factors which the school is beginning to address.

The quality of teaching is good

- The large majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire believe their child is taught well. Inspection evidence confirms this.
- The overall quality of teaching is good over time, and as a result pupils make good progress. Improving the quality of teaching is a priority of the school. The headteacher has worked hard to promote and develop good quality teaching. Training and support have been provided to increase the proportion of good teaching. There are, however, variations in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Overall, lessons are planned well to meet the needs of the differing abilities of pupils. However, in some lessons, the pace of learning slows because teachers do not adjust tasks during the lessons and opportunities are missed to use questions precisely enough to challenge pupils and increase their rate of progress.
- Although children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, opportunities are missed to develop children's independence. At times children spend too long listening to teacher-directed activities which limit their active involvement in learning. Resources are not always used imaginatively enough to provide occasions for children to be challenged and creative.
- Teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in different subjects in order to consolidate their writing skills.
- Most teachers mark pupils' work to a high standard, providing helpful comments to support pupils' understanding of the next steps the pupils need to take to improve their work. Supportive and developmental marking is more apparent in writing than in mathematics.
- The school is aware of the need to use targets in reading, writing and mathematics to focus pupils' learning and help pupils to understand what they aim to achieve. Targets are at an early stage of development. At present, pupils do not know the level they are working at or

what they have to do to reach the next level.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, they are polite and well mannered. They are keen to learn and display positive attitudes to one another and to adults during the school day.
- Pupils feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They play safely and sensibly outside. During the inspection they thoroughly enjoyed playing with the remains of the snowmen they had built on the school field the previous day!
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the on-line parent questionnaire at the time of the inspection say the school makes sure pupils are well behaved and deals effectively with bullying. There have been no exclusions over the past years.
- The school deals promptly and effectively when any incidents of inappropriate behaviour occur, although any such incidents are rare. Senior leaders resolve issues quickly and sensitively, discussing strategies for improving behaviour with pupils. Further monitoring takes place to check the resolution has been successful.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school which is reflected in their above average attendance.
- Pupils appreciate the opportunity to celebrate the success of others. This was evident in the Key Stage 1 assembly where pupils were proud to share their achievements and keen to see or hear about the skills of their classmates.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school with a strong sense of purpose, promoting teamwork and demonstrating a clear commitment to address the issues from the previous inspection in order to secure good outcomes for pupils.
- Senior leaders are focused and ambitious; they are passionate and want the very best for every pupil. All staff who completed the questionnaire during the inspection agree that the school is well led and managed.
- The headteacher manages teachers' performance well. She regularly observes lessons, checks pupils' work and through discussions, guidance and support ensures improvements are realised. In the last twelve months the quality of teaching has significantly improved, resulting in improved outcomes for pupils.
- The school has recently introduced a new system to track and monitor the progress of pupils across the school. Staff are developing their skills to use this information more readily to plan for the differing learning needs of all groups of pupils.
- Leaders successfully ensure that discrimination is tackled and all pupils have an equal opportunity to do well. The regular occurrence of meetings between teachers and the headteacher, to discuss pupils' progress and identify suitable intervention strategies to support pupils' learning, has been successful. Pupils with particular needs and those vulnerable to underachievement are nurtured and monitored carefully.
- The school provides an interesting and well-balanced curriculum, with a wide range of visits and visitors to enhance pupils' learning experiences and develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness which is good.
- Effective partnerships strengthen the opportunities for pupils to experience a wide range of diverse and interesting themes. For example, the Year 5 and 6 pupils delivered an 'Eco Show' to parents and other pupils to share their understanding of sustainability and environmental issues. Links with the local secondary school provide pupils with occasions to experience democracy through the Pupil Parliament.
- Safeguarding systems meet requirements. All checks on the suitability of staff are thorough. Training to ensure staff provide effective support and protection for pupils is up to date.

- The local authority has provided good support to improve the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy. The inclusion manager and the Early Years Foundation Stage adviser have also provided good support to the school. In addition, a Local Leader of Education has given effective support to the headteacher.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Following the last inspection, members of the governing body undertook a range of training to sharpen their skills. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their increased understanding of the data linked to pupils' achievement enables them to interrogate the information and raise questions relating to the progress of groups of pupils. Members of the governing body make regular visits to the school to monitor aspects of the school's single plan. This has considerably strengthened their ability to challenge and support the school. They have a good understanding of the way pupil premium funding is used to improve pupils' progress and regularly check on the impact of this funding on pupils' achievement. Governance is good. The governing body ensures systems to check on the performance of staff, including the headteacher, are in place and effective.
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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	123022
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	399712
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Dancer
Headteacher	Fi McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 January 2012
Telephone number	01993 891987
Fax number	01993 891074
Email address	office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

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