

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School

Long Lane, Stoke Holy Cross, Norwich, NR14 8LY

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Stoke Holy Cross has maintained its excellence since the last inspection, through significant changes including a new headteacher, and extensive building improvements.
- Pupils make outstanding progress and consistently achieve exceptionally well in reading, writing and mathematics. They use their excellent skills across different subjects and produce very high quality art and design work.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Staff enthusiastically seek ways to continually improve their practice. Lessons are well-planned and tasks are well matched to pupils' ability levels.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They have very positive attitudes to learning and this has a strong impact on their progress. The work in their books, and the things they say about the school, show they have great pride in their learning and in their school.
- The school is excellently led by the headteacher, along with her very strong senior leadership team. She has, with the support of all staff, continued to improve the school and ensure that it has not stood still since the last inspection. The links with parents and carers are excellent and have a very positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Leaders have an extensive range of information about pupils' progress and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the systems for recording this information do not always help staff to access and use this information very easily.
- The governors provide exemplary leadership and very effectively hold the school to account for its performance. They are very aware of the school's strengths but also investigate rapidly if there are any ways in which it can improve further which was exemplified by their response to a recent dip in Year 6 attainment.
- The leadership of reading, writing, mathematics, and the support for children in Reception, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is very effective.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons and parts of lessons. Some of these were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, parents, pupils and staff.
- Samples of pupils' work were considered. A number of pupils read to the inspectors.
- The inspectors analysed and took account of the 69 responses to the online survey (Parent View) and of the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at key inspection documents, including information on pupils' progress and attainment produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, self-evaluation work, reports to the governing body and the school improvement plan.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Mason

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stoke Holy Cross Primary School is smaller than the average primary school.
- The school hosts a privately run before- and after-school club, which is inspected and reported upon separately.
- A very large majority of the pupils are White British. Currently none of them are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average and very high in some year groups.
- A below-average proportion of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and extensive improvements made to the buildings and grounds.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the systems for tracking pupils' achievement data so that the information about small groups or individual pupils is more easily accessible and so can be used more effectively by all staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children start in Reception with knowledge, skills and understanding that are often below those expected for their age, especially in reading, aspects of mathematics, understanding of the world and creativity. They have well developed physical skills and aspects of their social and emotional development are strong. They make excellent progress over the year and by the time they enter Year 1, many are working at or above the levels expected, although their reading skills remain slightly below other areas.
- In the national check on Year 1 reading skills in 2012, pupils matched the attainment of most pupils nationally. Pupils throughout the school read confidently and widely, and enjoy talking about books.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils make outstanding progress and by the time they leave school, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently well above average. Although there was a dip in the national tests in 2012, the pupils who were at the school for the whole of Key Stage 2 made excellent progress. More pupils than in the previous year reached the higher levels in English and mathematics. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach well-above-average standards at the end of the year in English and mathematics.
- High-quality work was evident in almost all lessons observed, in pupils' past work and in some other subjects such as art and design and information and communication technology, as well as English and mathematics. For example, excellent art and design work in Year 6 produced work in the style of Lowry and clay tiles of cityscapes. Excellent use of computer software by other classes produced high quality work in the style of Pollack, Mondrian and Klee.
- A particular strength is the use of home learning in Year 6, where very high quality projects involving writing, art and model-making, resulted in outstanding learning about life during World War 2. The Reception 'Learning Books' contain excellent examples of activities undertaken at home to support progress. 'Maths Cafes' and the 'Maths Monkey' toy provide a further opportunity for parents and carers to take a full part in their child's learning.
- The numbers of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have grown significantly in recent years. They are extremely well supported and taught. These pupils make outstanding progress in developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills and are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- There were not enough pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in 2012 to comment on their attainment. However information about current Y6 pupils shows that they are achieving as well as their classmates

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- All of the teaching observed during the inspection was at least good and much was outstanding. This is why pupils' achievement is so high. Pupils talk confidently about how teachers help them learn new things and how the marking of their work helps them know what they need to do next to improve. Relationships between pupils and teachers are extremely strong. Partly because of this, pupils typically make outstanding progress in lessons.
- Teachers provide interesting and appropriate activities for pupils. In Year 2, for example, pupils

built on their knowledge of number and calculations in a practical way to create a bingo game. In Year 5, pupils spent a day experiencing an excellent range of activities leading to in depth learning about a wide range of environmental issues. Teachers are very effective at using new technology in their planning and teaching, and make sure that lessons are rich in stimulating resources.

- The youngest children have excellent opportunities to explore learning through a wide range of play and teacher-led activities. Children built on their learning about looking after pets by role play activities in a veterinary surgery. Outside activities encouraged boys to write and to count as they priced different car-washes for their wheeled toys.
- In Reception and Key Stage 1 the teaching of phonics is not yet fully successful as groups are often large with a range of ability which sometimes makes it more difficult for teachers to always accurately match the work to pupils' prior learning. However in other subjects tasks are successfully well-matched to pupils' differing needs.
- Teaching assistants play a very effective and integral role in the excellent teaching. They often make a very important contribution to pupils' learning and progress. This is especially the case when focused small group teaching provides an excellent boost to pupils' mathematical skills and also their confidence in tackling problems. Disabled pupils, and those with learning needs, receive outstanding support that enables them to take part fully in lessons.
- Nearly all lessons have an excellent pace and teachers make their expectations clear. Work is challenging but the very strong relationships ensure pupils are willing to try new things and answer questions even when unsure of the answer.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They are extremely polite and friendly, and show a genuine pride in their achievements and in their school. They live up to the school's strong values and as one said 'It's the best!' They are becoming responsible, respectful, caring members of society. This is shown by the level of their thought about others. Year 6 decided unprompted that as part of their cooking activities they would invite local older people to show them their work on World War 2.
- Pupils' attitudes have an extremely positive impact on their learning. There are no interruptions or disruption to learning, so teachers are able to provide interesting, exciting lessons. When asked if they have adults in school they would turn to if worried or who they could trust, the reply was 'Definitely!'
- Pupils say there is no bullying, and this is supported by the school's records which show that although incidents are very rare they are well dealt with when they occur. Pupils feel safe at school and almost all parents and carers who completed the on-line questionnaire agreed with this view. Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and they know how to keep themselves safe when using electronic devices.
- Pupils love taking responsibility and showing independence. This is evident in the large amount of charity work initiated by them, as well as through school council and the Green Team. They have met with the governing body and helped in the appointment process for staff and making spending decisions regarding playground equipment.

- Attendance is consistently above average and there are very few persistent absentees. The school works closely with parents and carers to encourage full attendance.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has provided excellent leadership since her appointment and this has ensured the school has built further on its previously outstanding achievement. She provides the school with a clear plan for the future that is shared by the other senior leaders and the governors, with a strong focus on high achievement.
- Excellent leadership in most areas of the school has a clearly positive impact on pupils' progress. This includes leadership of the key subjects of English and mathematics, and the way disabled pupils, others who have special educational needs and Reception children are catered for. This leadership is supported by detailed information on how well pupils are performing. However, the systems for recording and analysing this data are not efficient enough at enabling leaders and other staff to draw out the evidence of progress, including of some smaller groups of pupils.
- The headteacher carefully monitors teachers' performance in a way that links closely to the school's improvement priorities and leads to focused staff training. This has been successful in improving teachers' skills and knowledge in a number of areas. In addition the quality of teaching is now more consistently good or outstanding as weaknesses have been faced and addressed. This has led to better teaching and learning in aspects of mathematics and writing.
- The local authority has provided an appropriately 'light touch' level of support for this outstanding school. In particular it provides a regular annual check on achievement and support through training for staff and governors on request.
- The school has developed an excellent curriculum which supports pupils' learning. Activities are often enriched through very productive visits and visitors, and all pupils enjoy residential experiences. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the way subjects are taught and a wide range of other activities, including charity work and learning about other cultures, countries and faiths.
- The school takes every opportunity to promote tolerance and respect for others, and to make sure every pupil has an equal chance to succeed. The small amount of money available through the pupil premium is used very effectively to support eligible pupils' learning and give them the same opportunities, academically, socially and personally, as the others.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors provide the school with exemplary leadership in a number of ways. They keep a very close check on the school's success and react quickly to any indications of a slip in quality or outcomes. They are clear about the school's effectiveness and its place in the local community and the cluster of local schools. Governors have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. This is because they are very well informed through their visits to school and through meetings and reports from the headteacher and senior staff. Governors involve themselves fully in the life of the school and take part in a wide variety of informal and more formal events. Many volunteer and help in school in a wide range of ways. The governors understand and use a wide range of information about how well the school is doing. Their thorough systems for checking its work mean that they are well aware of the school's targets and how they are arrived at, staff's strengths and weaknesses and how these have an impact on salary and appraisal issues. They carefully control the budget, including teachers' pay, the use of the pupil premium money and

that relating to statements of special educational needs. The governors make sure that all national requirements, including those for safeguarding, are fully met.

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	120910
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	413242

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trudy Musgrove
Headteacher	Sue Simmonds
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
Telephone number	01508 493132
Fax number	01508 493132
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