

Stalmine Primary School

Mill Lane, Stalmine, Poulton-le-Fylde, FY6 0LR

Inspection dates 3–4 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Achievement is good. Most pupils make good progress and reach the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils who reach levels above those expected for their age by the end of Key Stage 2 in reading and writing, has improved and has been above the national average for the past two years.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and pupils say that they enjoy their lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who try hard to do as well as they can. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils.
- This is a happy and very inclusive school where pupils feel very safe and well looked after. They care about one another and enjoy taking on responsibilities.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Her vision of providing the best possible opportunities for all pupils is shared by an enthusiastic team of staff.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school and help to drive improvement through their support and the challenging questions they ask.
- The headteacher and governors have taken decisive action, which has led to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement, particularly in reading and writing.
- Parents are extremely supportive of the school and appreciate all that it does for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The overall quality of teaching is not yet outstanding. In some lessons, pupils are given work that is not at exactly the right level for them. Teachers' marking does not always show precisely what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve further.
- Although progress in mathematics is accelerating, pupils do not yet do as well as they do in reading and writing. Not enough pupils reach levels above those expected for their age.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in seven lessons. She listened to pupils reading and observed the teaching of early reading skills. She also looked at examples of pupils' work to obtain a view of teaching and progress over time.
- Discussions took place with pupils, parents, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, a representative from the local authority and teaching and support staff.
- The inspector took account of 25 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), two letters from parents, a telephone call, and 10 staff questionnaires.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' progress across the school, the school's view of its own effectiveness and its development planning, records of the quality of teaching and learning, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documentation in relation to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. A much larger number of pupils join the school during Key Stages 1 and 2 than is typically seen.
- All pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority. In some year groups there are no pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that its overall quality is outstanding, by:
 - giving all pupils activities in lessons which are at just the right level for them
 - making sure that teachers' marking always gives pupils clear guidance on what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve their work, and that pupils always have the chance to act on this advice
 - providing teachers with more opportunities to share outstanding practice, including observing the best teaching in other schools
 - using feedback from the headteacher's lesson observations more effectively to help teachers improve their teaching further.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics in order to raise standards further, and increase the number of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age, by:
 - improving opportunities to develop pupils' basic number skills at an early stage in order to ensure that they have a secure foundation for their future learning
 - providing all pupils with further opportunities to apply their skills in mathematics to solving problems in real-life contexts
 - ensuring that the most able pupils of all ages are always given work in mathematics that challenges them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below those expected for their age, although there are significant variations between different cohorts of children. Children make good progress and most of them reach levels close to those expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year.
- Pupils in all year groups, including those who arrive later than at the usual times, continue to make good progress during Key Stages 1 and 2. Results in national tests fluctuate considerably due to the small number of pupils in each year group, many of whom join the school during Key Stages 1 and 2. However, over the past three years, almost all pupils have reached the levels expected for their age and increasing numbers have reached levels above those expected by the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils do not do as well in mathematics as they do in reading and writing. Although a small group of the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6 currently receive very effective additional support, the most able pupils in other classes are not always provided with work that is sufficiently challenging. Consequently, not enough pupils reach levels in mathematics above those expected for their age.
- Pupils entering the school during Key Stages 1 and 2 are quickly assessed and given additional support if necessary, so that these pupils make good progress from their individual starting points when they join the school.
- The very small number of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support make good progress. In each year group there are only one or two pupils at most, so comparisons between their attainment and that of other pupils at the end of Year 6 are not statistically valid.
- The growing numbers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, some of whom have complex needs, are provided with a range of flexible and well-targeted support. This means that most of them make good progress from their individual starting points, and some make outstanding progress.
- The effective support provided for individual pupils and groups with widely differing circumstances and needs, so that they are all helped to make good progress, is clear evidence of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Children make good progress in their early reading skills. They enjoy the games and activities which help them to learn to read and they quickly develop a love of reading. A broadly average proportion of pupils in Year 1 reach the expected standard in reading words, and those who do not reach this standard are given additional support which accelerates their progress, in some cases significantly so, in Years 2 and 3. One of the things pupils say they like about the school is the wide range of books on offer and the many opportunities they have to read individually and in groups.
- Pupils apply their reading and writing skills well in a range of different subjects across the curriculum. They write confidently in different styles and for a range of purposes, including the completion of creative and very popular homework activities. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 developed their understanding of 'powerful imagery' as they described a waterfall using imaginative similes and metaphors. However, pupils have fewer opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem solving in real-life contexts.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good relationships and the use of praise and encouragement are a strong feature of all lessons. Teachers select topics and resources that they know will appeal to pupils and get them interested. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve, pupils work hard, and their work shows that they take pride in what they do.
- In lessons, teachers use very skilful questioning to check pupils' understanding and to help them

develop their ideas further. Pupils in Year 1 explained their understanding of 'more than' and 'less than' as they exchanged coins of different values, whilst those in Year 2 and 3 confidently suggested ways to improve each other's descriptive phrases to include in autumn poems.

- Experienced and highly-skilled teaching assistants have a very good understanding of individual pupils' needs. They support individual pupils' learning well and help plan specific activities for small groups so that pupils across the school make good progress in lessons.
- Teachers make it very clear to pupils what they are expected to learn. Pupils regularly take part in assessing their own and each other's work. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and praise their efforts. However, although there are examples of marking being used well to move learning forward, teachers' comments do not always make it clear to pupils what they have achieved or exactly what they need to do to improve. Pupils do not always have opportunities to act on the advice given.
- In most lessons, teachers prepare a range of different activities for pupils of different abilities and pupils are actively involved at all stages of the lesson. However, occasionally activities are too easy or too hard for pupils and some pupils lose interest.
- Basic skills in reading and writing are taught well throughout the school. However, teaching in mathematics does not always ensure that all pupils develop a secure foundation in number skills at an early stage, on which to build as they move up through the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are friendly and polite. They behave considerately as they move around the school. They get on well together in their work and in their play. Older pupils love the opportunity to look after younger pupils as 'buddies'.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. They say that, although they are expected to work hard, teachers make lessons interesting and fun. However, on the small number of occasions when pupils become less interested because the work is not at exactly the right level, some minor misbehaviour does occur.
- Consistently applied systems to manage pupils' behaviour mean that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Adults provide calm and effective support for the small number of pupils who find it hard to behave well, so that learning is not disrupted.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying and say that it 'doesn't happen'. They know that name-calling is wrong and can be very hurtful. When they do fall out with each other, things are sorted out quickly, and they know that adults will always be there to talk to them if they are worried about anything.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and know how to stay safe in situations beyond the school, including when using the internet. Parents are equally certain that the school keeps their children safe.
- The many pupils who join the school after the Reception Year settle in quickly, and they and their parents say how welcoming the school is.
- The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly and on time. The school has flexible and highly personalised systems in place which support those pupils whose attendance is not as good due to medical or emotional needs, so that they do not fall behind in their learning.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high expectations of what staff and pupils at the school can achieve. Her vision is shared by all staff, who care deeply about the pupils and are equally committed to providing them with the best possible learning opportunities to prepare them for the future.
- The headteacher, governors and staff are accurate and honest in their judgements about the school. They analyse data and other information carefully and plan appropriate actions to bring about improvement. Actions taken have had a significant impact on achievement in reading and

writing.

- The headteacher regularly checks on the quality of teaching and learning and her judgements are accurate. However, feedback from lesson observations is not always used well enough by the headteacher to set targets to help teachers improve their practice. Teachers do not have enough opportunities to share and observe outstanding teaching, including the best practice in other schools.
- The headteacher and other staff carefully track the progress of each individual pupil. They take prompt action and provide additional support and special programmes where there is any sign that pupils are falling behind in their learning or are struggling to manage their feelings or behaviour. The effectiveness of these programmes is reviewed frequently to make sure they are meeting pupils' varied needs.
- The curriculum is well organised and meets pupils' needs well. It provides pupils with a range of memorable experiences and extra activities. Pupils talk excitedly about the outdoor activities they enjoyed on the residential visit. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through opportunities to reflect on the world around them and their place within it.
- The school is making good use of the new Primary School Sport funding to provide training for staff to improve the teaching of physical education. The school has increased the range of sporting activities on offer and their accessibility to all pupils. As a result, more pupils are taking advantage of the opportunities to take part in different sports.
- Relationships with parents are excellent. They appreciate the warmth and approachability of all staff, and the fact that the school 'will always go the extra mile' to meet the needs of individuals. Parents thoroughly enjoy being involved in school life, from the well-attended 'Chatterboxes' parent and toddler group, to helping their children prepare meals and write about this as part of their homework.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body know the school well. They have a good understanding of the school's performance data and know how well the pupils are doing and what needs to be done to improve. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and of teachers' appraisal procedures and the connection between the effectiveness of teachers' work and the arrangements for increases in salary. They ask challenging questions which rigorously hold the school to account for all aspects of its work and ensure that there is no complacency. They check that the pupil premium funding is allocated well and monitor its impact on eligible pupils. They are fully committed to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination of any kind.

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	119147
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	427386

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	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Parsons
Headteacher	Christine Hallett
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2009
Telephone number	01253 700284
Fax number	01253 702081
Email address	head@stalmine.lancs.sch.uk

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