

Stokes Wood Primary School

Blackett Avenue, , Leicester, LE3 9BX

Inspection dates

6–7 November 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.

- Given their individual starting points when they join the school, most pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The school is particularly successful in the promotion of a love of reading and enabling pupils to develop this important skill.
- Pupils' good attitudes to learning are fostered particularly well, right across the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make increasingly good progress in all areas of their learning and development.
- Most teaching is good, and pupils learn well within a stimulating environment.
- Staff see pupils' potential to achieve well; an atmosphere of mutual respect is encouraged.
- Good leadership from senior leaders and the governing body results from an accurate assessment of the school's effectiveness and a clear focus on improving pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- The school has proved particularly successful in enabling those pupils who qualify for additional government funding to make good progress.
- Discussions with parents and those who responded to the Parent View survey show that almost all appreciate that their children are happy and safe in school.
- The school is regarded highly by its families because of its focus on pupils' personal as well as their academic development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding; some still leaves insufficient time for pupils to discuss and reflect on their learning.
- Pupils' standards by Year 6 in writing, including in punctuation, grammar and spelling, are not as high as those they achieve in reading and mathematics.
- The school has not yet fully extended its work on pupils' vocabulary, and linked work on letters and sounds, to pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- A few less-experienced subject and key stage leaders are still developing their management skills, particularly in the use of progress data and the monitoring of teaching.
- Attendance is improving, but the school is still establishing a track record of at least average attendance and there remain some concerns about punctuality. The school knows it still has work to do to persuade a number of families of the value and importance of education.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons and all 13 class teachers. Five lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the work of teaching assistants, working with individuals and small groups of pupils who experience difficulty with their learning, was also observed.
- Daily registration times were observed and inspectors attended an assembly. In addition, inspectors undertook short observations of what pupils did in lessons and around the school to observe its life and pupils at work. The team also undertook a scrutiny of samples of pupils' work, selected at random by inspectors. They also heard a sample of pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with groups of pupils selected at random by the lead inspector. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including: development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, various monitoring files, reports on the school by the local authority, safeguarding and curriculum materials, information provided for families, and governing body documents. The school's data and assessment records for the tracking of pupils' progress were scrutinised.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, subject and key stage coordinators, class teachers, learning support staff, administrative staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The 36 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into consideration. The 32 responses to the questionnaire for school staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Michael Miller, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stewart Gale	Additional Inspector
Carol Deakin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils continue their education at the school from the Early Years Foundation Stage until they leave at the end of Year 6.
- The large majority of the pupils come from White British backgrounds. The largest minority heritage group is of Asian or Asian British pupils. A few come from various other backgrounds.
- Most pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is average; few are at an early stage of English language development.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well-above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well-above average.
- Most pupils receiving additional support have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, moderate learning difficulty, speech, language and communication needs and/or experience specific learning difficulty. Others experience a range of other difficulties or disabilities.
- The headteacher is a member of the City Primary Headteachers' Group. She is a representative on its steering committees with responsibility for promoting physical education across Leicester City and the development of 'nurture groups' across the authority.
- The governing body manages two breakfast clubs each day during term time, solely for pupils at the school. The first is to promote the development of pupils' reading and the second involves more traditional childcare at the start of each school day; neither requires separate registration.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the momentum for improving teaching and pupils' achievement is maintained across all year groups, particularly in writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation by:
 - ensuring pupils have the maximum possible time to discuss and reflect on their learning, both together and with their teachers
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to develop and enrich their vocabulary so they can express themselves consistently well and with confidence both verbally and in writing
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to use and apply their writing skills across a wider range of subjects, and through situations which relate directly to their everyday lives
 - making improved use of the good work on letters and sound (phonics) and related vocabulary work now being extended into Years 5 and 6 in order to help enrich pupils' writing.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of the school and the monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress, by helping the school's less-experienced subject and key stage leaders to develop fully the skills they need to support senior leaders in checking the school's work and raise pupils' achievement further.
- Build on the school's good partnership with parents by working with families to ensure fewer absences and increased punctuality to school, thus promoting the value of education and enhancing the pupils' opportunities to make progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding well below those expected for their age. Children are mainly some 18 to 20 months below the levels expected nationally when they join the Nursery. Many children entering the Reception classes have experienced no Nursery education and their overall development is, typically, some 14 to 18 months below that expected of children nationally.
- Consistently good teaching and skilful assessment in the Nursery and Reception classes enable children to make good progress. Consequently, by the time children leave the Reception classes, the large majority have gained a firm foundation for their future progress in Key Stage 1.
- During Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils continue to progress well. By the time they leave, at the end of Year 6, most pupils are attaining average standards. However, their attainment in writing, and in the new English grammar, punctuation and spelling test, is not yet as strong as their attainment in reading and mathematics.
- Improving pupils' writing skills remains an important target for the school. However, standards by the end of Year 6 have risen over the last three years from below average to average in the national tests. There is still work to do in this aspect of the pupils' literacy work, but the school is now focusing more sharply on extending into Years 5 and 6 the good work on letters and sounds (phonics) seen in earlier year groups. However, this has not yet gone far enough in improving the pupils' writing skills, or in developing their vocabulary for writing.
- Reading is promoted well throughout the school. The library, although it has to be in removable cabinets in the hall, is well organised and used effectively. Pupils' displays about their reading work, from designs for bookmarks to book reviews, illustrate how important reading is to the pupils and the ways good reading skills enhance their attitudes to learning.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2013, the proportion of pupils gaining and exceeding the expected minimum mark was average. Given the pupils' skills two or three years earlier, when they first joined the school, this represents particularly good and improving progress.
- School data show many of the nearly 40% of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding (pupil premium) are also disabled or have special educational needs. These pupils achieve well given their individual starting points.
- In summer 2013, pupils eligible for the pupil premium were only just over a term behind both their classmates and all pupils nationally, although between two to three terms behind in writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Over the last three years, the proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium who did not gain the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics has been halved. While there are relatively few higher-attaining pupils among this group, the school enables more-able pupils to make good progress and few fail to gain their predicted levels by Year 6.
- The school's strong approach to ensuring equality for all is shown in the ways it uses the pupil premium to focus staff and resources on providing well-planned support from teachers and support staff. This ensures good planning to meet individual pupils' specific needs. The school has developed its own 'nurture group', which provides specialist support for the wide range of

pupils who find learning more difficult and those for whom English is an additional language. The latter pupils, in particular, make good progress and achieve well.

- Pupils' achievement is enhanced further through the school's continued promotion of the 2012 Olympic heritage. In support of this, the school is making particularly good use of the new primary school sports funding, not only to employ experienced, specialist sports coaches and a sports graduate, but also to promote sports and healthy activities, such as golf and street dance. Such pursuits are also proving highly successful in engaging those pupils who show particularly challenging behaviour.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Teachers and their assistants alike develop very positive working relationships with the pupils. This underpins effectively the pupils' good attitudes to learning. The focus on pupils' personal as well as academic progress is a strength and was highlighted by parents when talking with inspectors.
- Most teachers show that they are good at asking questions of the pupils, both to check understanding and provide an extra element of challenge in a lesson. The pupils show that they are keen to rise to such challenges. Marking is very regular and oral feedback helpful; pupils say this enables them to understand their next steps in learning and what to improve.
- Teachers across the school have worked hard to improve the quality of their teaching of writing, including pupils' work on English punctuation, spelling and grammar. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that marking is now focusing particularly well on this aspect of literacy, but the school accepts the impact of this has still to be seen – for example, in the 2014 national tests.
- Teachers and their assistants show they are open to the sharing of good practice. This is helping to bring about further improvements in both reading and writing. The methodical practice in the teaching of letters and sounds, which is well-established in earlier year groups, is only now being extended fully into Years 5 and 6 to help improve further individual pupils' reading where their skills are weaker, extend their creative vocabulary and enrich their writing.
- Some impressive teaching was seen across the school. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 English lesson pupils were using their creative imagination to very good effect in writing 'spoof' explanations. Typical was pupils' explanation of how a stereo works – because there are 'really fairies in each speaker'. Pupils of all abilities rose well to the challenge of this writing task, and had great fun while doing so.
- Where teaching requires improvement, it is often because teachers or teaching assistants simply talk too much at the pupils. This limits the time pupils have to undertake the work planned for the lesson and their opportunities to discuss and reflect on their work and make good progress. There were also missed opportunities to encourage the pupils to extend their vocabulary to enrich their writing or make use of the potential for writing across subjects other than English.
- The use of assessments to help plan teaching and learning is particularly good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Daily observations by teachers and assistants are collated in the children's 'Learning Journey' achievement records. These provide a clear picture of children's progress and development across all aspects of learning and development.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage staff also make good use of links with other local providers, such as child-minders and a local children's centre. Home visits help staff to make important

assessments of the children before they start in the Nursery or Reception classes; this enables children to start school with confidence. Suitably high expectations of the children are set in both the Nursery and Reception Years. Routines and opportunities are established well at this stage.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- An important strength of the school is its welcoming and supportive environment. It is a very friendly community within which pupils work and play in safety and confidence. The responses to Parent View help confirm that behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning are typically good. Most pupils show persistence and concentration when learning and cooperate well.
- Pupils take on responsibility readily. They show a good awareness of the implications and consequences of the different types of bullying; their moral and social development is good. Discussions with parents and pupils show that they trust the staff. The foundations for pupils' good attitudes are being laid securely from the day they start in the Nursery or Reception Years.
- The school has a number of pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour consistently well throughout a school day. However, behaviour is managed uniformly well across the school. Pupils are helped to control themselves and not disrupt learning. They are encouraged and enabled to become involved actively in school life.
- Attendance has improved to broadly average, but there is still some lateness each morning. School data show persistent absences and lateness are linked largely to only a relatively few families. The school has good working relationships with almost all of its families, but its improvement planning recognises there is more to be done with some to promote the value of the education it provides in enabling pupils to make progress.
- Many lessons promote well the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and excellent opportunity was taken in a Year 2 art lesson to help pupils to think about the quality of light. Discussions with pupils showed they appreciated the links being made with their science work. They also showed the depth of their spiritual understanding when they told the inspector: 'We are not just drawing; we are not just painting ... we are creating art!'

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders, at all levels, do make important differences to pupils' lives and achievement. Discussions with families at the school gate confirm this often extends to whole families. The school has gained a justifiably good reputation within its local community for advancing pupils' personal and academic achievement, particularly because of the approachability of staff.
- The steady and secure progress pupils make, in both their personal and academic development, reflects the good teamwork among staff and a good capacity for further improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and focused well on moving it from good to outstanding.
- Shared lesson observations show that the headteacher evaluates accurately the quality of teaching. Subject and key stage coordinators are all full-time class teachers; some, relatively new to their posts, are still developing the skills necessary to support the headteacher in the monitoring of teaching and the analysis and evaluation of performance data so they can have more impact on raising pupils' achievement.
- The deputy headteacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator and the advanced skills teacher have the experience to assess accurately the quality of teaching and learning. Together

with the headteacher, they set a good example for less-experienced staff. Discussions with staff show they are open to the sharing of good practice and new ideas.

- Across the school, teachers have developed a good range of subjects and topics which make pupils' learning interesting. Learning is complemented further by a programme of extra-curricular activities which broaden and enhance well pupils' experiences.
- The school has well-established links with its local authority, which have benefited the school well. Further support is planned to help subject and key stage leaders develop their management skills and support the promotion of improved attendance.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body both supports and challenges the school well. A number of governors are regular volunteers who work with the pupils. Their commitment helps the governing body to be well informed about the school's performance and how and why pupils make progress.
- Governors compare and contrast the school's performance effectively with others nationally, because they have access to a good range of data on pupils' progress and attainment. The governing body knows how the pupil premium funding and other funding such as the primary school sports funding is spent. Such funds are being used well not only on additional, specialist staffing to provide extra tuition but also to ensure no pupils are disadvantaged.
- Together with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the governing body makes sure procedures and policies for safeguarding pupils are in place.
- Until September 2013, the school operated the local authority's model policies which gave teachers automatic annual salary increases, regardless of performance. The governing body is currently working with the local authority to ensure that in future, promotions are linked specifically to pupils' progress and school improvement, in line with national guidelines.
- The governing body ensures that there are systematic checks on the effectiveness of teaching. The school has developed a clear appraisal system through which teachers' performance management targets are linked closely both to school improvement priorities, national teaching standards and teachers' requests for professional development.

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	120038
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	425078

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	384
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dawn Chapman
Headteacher	Jane Gadsby
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2008
Telephone number	0116 2875305
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