

Stockton-on-the-Forest Primary School

Stockton-on-the-Forest, York, North Yorkshire, YO32 9UP

Inspection dates 5–6 February 2014

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 because pupils make good progress from a range of different starting points. As a result, by the end of Year 6, standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics are often above those expected nationally.
- Pupils often work in mixed-aged classes because of the small numbers in school. Because staff are skilled at ensuring the needs of each child are met, the vast majority achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is nearly always good with examples of outstanding practice.
- The vast majority of learning is active, enjoyable and enables pupils to make good progress, as evidenced by the good quality of work seen in pupils' workbooks.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning in the classroom and this contributes to their good achievement. Behaviour outside the classroom is also good because pupils have courteous and considerate attitudes to staff, visitors and each other. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say they feel safe because, 'Staff are kind and caring.'
- The headteacher and curriculum leaders have worked closely together to sustain and build on the school's good performance and raise both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement across the school since the previous inspection.
- Members of the governing body have a broad range of skills which they use effectively to offer support and challenge to senior leaders. Their work has directly contributed to the school's improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing in Key Stage 2 are lower than those in mathematics and reading because tasks set do not always capture pupils' imagination and increase their enthusiasm for writing.
- Provision in the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage is less good than that offered in the classroom. As a result, children do not have enough opportunities to play and explore in the outside area.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons and parts of lessons taught by four teachers and support staff. A joint lesson observation was undertaken with the headteacher. The inspector also listened to pupils from Year 1 read and examined the quality of work in the books of pupils from across the school.
- The inspector held meetings and had discussions with pupils, the headteacher, members of the school staff and three members of the governing body. She also held a telephone conversation with a member of the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the views of 27 parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parents' View).
- The inspector studied health and safety documentation, teachers' curriculum planning, documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff and the school's system for checking pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils who attend come from families of White British heritage with a very small number from other ethnic groups.
- Because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group, pupils are often taught in mixed-aged classes.
- A lower than average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those from service families.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is close to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone a significant period of change with the appointment of two new teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in writing so that it equals that in reading and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by including opportunities to report on visits and activities to raise pupils' enthusiasm for writing and improve their skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, increase the number and range of activities in the outdoor area so that children have the opportunity to engage more effectively in planned, purposeful play outside the classroom.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Last year, by the end of Year 6, standards reached by pupils were close to those expected nationally. Although a much smaller year group, current Year 6 pupils are making good progress in English and mathematics and are on course to make even greater gains than last year from a range of starting points. This represents good achievement overall.
- Key Stage 2 pupils make slightly slower progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. Although work in their books shows that they are able to write pieces of work which show good use of grammar and punctuation, longer pieces of work often show a lack of imagination and creativity. This is because they do not always have sufficient opportunity to develop their writing skills by gaining experiences away from the classroom through, for example, visits from authors and poets or visits to places of interest.
- The most able pupils in Year 6 are currently making good and better progress in mathematics and English and a small group are currently receiving extra support and tuition with the expectation that they will reach Level 5 and 6 in this year's national tests.
- Pupils spoken to say they enjoy reading, 'even when it's really hard', commented a Year 1 pupil. The weekly visits to the school by the mobile library have increased pupils' love of reading. Discovering new authors who write especially for boys, 'has turned me into a book worm!' commented a Year 4 pupil.
- Children often join the Reception class with reading, writing and numeracy development below that typically expected for their age. The majority make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and leave with skills and knowledge which are closer to the average expected for their age.
- Attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 last year was slightly above national expectations. Current school data show pupils are set to make similar gains next year. Lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' work and listening to pupils read during the inspection confirmed this.
- The school is justifiably proud of the achievement of Year 1 pupils whose scores were above the national average in the phonics screening check which tests pupils' ability to link letters to sounds. This is because of the good quality and clearly focused phonics teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress. Last year, attainment for this group was higher than that nationally by approximately one term and was equal to peers in school. The school's current data show few or no gaps in the attainment of this group and others in the school. This is due to the effective use of pupil premium monies which the school has used to provide extra support to boost pupils' achievement through one-to-one and small group sessions.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, the most able, those from other ethnic backgrounds and those who are new to learning English make equally good progress as their peers and achieve well in English and mathematics because teachers identify and provide well-targeted extra help and guidance that meets their needs. This shows how the school promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. That observed during the inspection was good and some was outstanding. Evidence seen in pupils' books and the school's records further supports senior leaders' views that the quality of teaching is good over time.
- Information about how well pupils are doing is used effectively to plan lessons. As a result, work set accurately meets the needs of pupils, including the most able, and enables all groups to make good progress.

- Teachers are good at making learning enjoyable. The words of one young pupil sum up the views of others, 'I love maths lessons because we use what we've learnt to solve problems and then I understand it even better.'
- This approach could clearly be seen in an exciting and innovative Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson in which pupils were using a range of different techniques to solve problems calculating how many different ways three dimensional shapes could be made. The teacher nominated one pupil as 'teacher' who answered pupils' queries. This approach meant pupils did not rely on adult support and pupils learnt how to work on their own. This was clearly demonstrated by the enthusiastic way in which the groups set about the task, using their own knowledge and understanding to solve the problems set.
- Parents feel the Reception class gives their children a good start. Close working partnerships with the other nursery providers locally ensure children make a smooth transition and settle quickly into the routines of school. Although teaching is generally good inside the classroom, planned activities in the outside space do not always match this good standard. As a result, children do not engage in purposeful play as often and opportunities are missed to develop key skills and knowledge through, for example, exploring the world outside and developing physical skills such as pedalling large toys. When this happens, learning slows.
- Teachers and support assistants work closely together and effective working partnerships are evident across the school. Extra sessions planned for pupils who need additional help with their learning enable them to make the same good progress as others in the school.
- Pupils are proud of their work. Teachers recognise this and display pupils' work in classrooms and corridors. They mark pupils' work diligently and effectively and this ensures pupils across the school are clear about how to improve.
- Lessons in art and design, religious education and personal and social education promote pupils' good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good and they demonstrate good and sometimes outstanding attitudes to learning. They also show very caring and friendly attitudes to each other, staff and visitors. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils act as play leaders, ensuring younger pupils enjoy a range of activities at lunchtime. This responsibility is taken seriously and, as one pupil said, 'We help to make sure younger children have more fun.'
- Although pupils are keen and eager to learn and show positive attitudes to their work, occasionally, when teaching does not capture pupils' full attention, behaviour dips.
- Parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, were unanimous in their view that behaviour in school is good and that their children are safe and happy.
- School logs show that incidents of difficult behaviour have reduced year-on-year because of the effective behaviour policy which is consistently applied across the school. Records also show that no pupil has been excluded in the last three years, which is further evidence of the calm and effective approach taken by all staff.
- Attendance has improved year-on-year for the last three years and is now just above the national average. This continued improvement is due to the headteacher's strong and effective stance on reducing the number of holidays taken in term time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils spoken to were very clear about the different forms bullying can take. They feel incidents happen infrequently because staff ensure pupils are made aware of how to keep safe and where to turn should an incident happen inside or outside school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows the school well and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. Staff share her vision. As a result, the good standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained and built upon.
- For example, the quality of teaching has been improved as evidenced by the rise in achievement in the end-of-Year 2 assessments and the good standards reached by pupils in the Year 1 phonics check, as well as the good quality of work observed in pupils' books.
- The school development plan accurately identifies those areas of the school's work which need improvement and targets set are sharply focused.
- Middle leaders, including curriculum coordinators, check the quality of teaching in their subjects well and this has contributed directly to improvement in pupils' achievement.
- School leaders ensure performance targets for staff link directly to pupils' achievement and targets within the school development plan. Checks on the performance of staff are undertaken and the headteacher has used this information to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- The curriculum is well organised and links between subjects are clear. Plans are in place to meet the expectations of planned national changes. However, the curriculum is not always sufficiently enriched to improve Key Stage 2 pupils' imaginative writing. As a result, pupils' writing is at times dull and lacks imagination.
- The school has developed a clear plan for using their allocation of sports partnership monies. It has, in partnership with other schools, employed sports coaches who teach high-quality lessons for pupils and training opportunities for staff to develop new skills. These are improving the quality of physical education teaching and the health and well-being of pupils.
- Since the previous inspection the local authority has offered school light-touch support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a range of skills and experience to the governing body. They regularly update and improve these skills through further training. As a result, they have a good understanding of pupils' achievement and offer senior leaders good levels of support and challenge to improve standards of achievement. In partnership with senior leaders, governors have developed an effective system for checking the performance of all staff which rewards good teaching and addresses underperformance. They manage pupil premium funding prudently and this careful management has enabled them to support eligible pupils well. Safeguarding procedures and policies meet current requirements.

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	121360
Local authority	York
Inspection number	431384

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	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Temperton
Headteacher	Sarah Mills
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2009
Telephone number	01904 400366
Fax number	01904 400366
Email address	stocktononforest.primary@york.gov.uk

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