

Stakeford Primary School

East Ford Road, Stakeford, Choppington, Northumberland NE62 5TZ

Inspection dates

29–30 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders are committed to the progress and wider personal development of pupils. They have secured consistent improvement over the past two years and responded very well to the transformation from a first school to a primary school.
- Effective systems are in place to check pupils' progress and subsequently adapt teaching and additional support to address underachievement.
- Effectively planned teaching enables pupils to achieve good levels of attainment and make good progress.
- Governors are committed to the success of the school and make regular visits to check aspects of the school's performance. The chair of the governing body works well with the school improvement partner to track pupils' progress.
- Teachers promote positive behaviour through good learning routines and the provision of purposeful activities in lessons, at lunchtimes and after school.
- Teachers demonstrate convincing subject expertise in numeracy and literacy that supports pupils in making good progress. This expertise is not as evident in topic work in history and geography.
- Teaching enables the vast majority of pupils to reach standards appropriate for their age, so that in 2016, the proportion of pupils to achieve expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was in the top 10% of schools nationally. However, not enough pupils are working at greater depth.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. Teachers are committed to the welfare and well-being of their pupils.
- The school works effectively with improvement partners to check the quality of teaching and the accuracy of assessment.
- Despite recent improvements, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remain more likely to be absent than their peers.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making improving rates of progress and differences in attainment are diminishing, with disadvantaged pupils outperforming their peers in a number of year groups. However, variance remains in some year groups and they are less likely to work at greater depth.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils working at greater depth by:
 - developing pupils' abilities to solve more complex problems, particularly in mathematics
 - supporting improvements in the style and content of pupils' writing, with higher standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - ensuring that expectations in topic books are as high as those in literacy and numeracy books.
- Further diminish differences in the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils by:
 - matching teaching and targeted intervention ever more closely to the needs of such pupils so that recent improvements in progress can be further accelerated
 - increasing opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to work at greater depth
 - reviewing the progress of disadvantaged pupils regularly in the new programme of monitoring meetings with parents and carers.
- Accelerate the impact of actions to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
 - closely tracking the attendance of individuals and key groups of pupils
 - building closer relationships with families and external partners and agencies to support improvements in attendance
 - ensuring that all review meetings for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities discuss attendance and strategies to reduce absence
 - ensuring that governors and improvement partners review attendance information more closely.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have sustained improvement in the school's transition from a first school to a primary school. The demands of the new curriculum were intensified with increased staffing instability, with a number of colleagues on maternity leave, but, nevertheless, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined at key stage 2 in 2016 was well above that seen nationally.
- Senior leaders have introduced new, more effective systems to track pupils' progress across the school. Teachers discuss their pupils' progress at termly review meetings and additional checks are provided by literacy and numeracy leaders. As a result, teachers are better able to respond more swiftly to address underachievement and plan interventions to support pupils to make better progress.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's overall strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. They have worked with their school improvement partner and the local authority to check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the progress that pupils make.
- The headteacher and middle leaders carry out regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and the standard of work in books. Leaders also review planning to ensure that this addresses school priorities and the more challenging curriculum demands. These processes are leading to a sharper focus on areas for improvement.
- Arrangements to manage the performance of staff are effective. The headteacher ensures that whole-school priorities are reflected in the targets of teachers at all levels and that they link closely to the progress that pupils make. Teachers' progress towards these targets is reviewed at regular intervals.
- School leaders have used pupil premium funding to improve provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils over time. In addition to maintaining smaller class sizes in single-year groups, disadvantaged pupils access specific programmes to support their progress in English and mathematics. The headteacher has also introduced specific review meetings with parents to support their progress and attendance. This is contributing to disadvantaged pupils making improving progress by the end of key stage 2 and differences diminishing in many other year groups.
- Leaders carefully review additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They have implemented a range of measures to support individuals and key groups, which are contributing to improving progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers plan carefully to address the needs of the new curriculum and ensure that appropriate knowledge and skills are delivered. The focus upon mathematics and English is supported by work in science, geography, history and physical education. In some year groups, the focus upon history and geography lacks the rigour seen in English and mathematics.
- A wide range of additional clubs and activities enhance pupils' personal and social development. In addition to active lunchtimes, pupils have access to more reflective

activities such as book club, colouring club, computer programming and a journalism club. The vast majority of pupils I talked to had taken part in some form of extra-curricular activity to build their confidence and self-esteem.

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop an awareness of faiths and cultures and have combated racism through work with the 'show racism the red card' programme. Pupils also develop a sense of democracy through the work of the student council and links with the parish council. Pupils have developed an insight into traditions and members of the school council regularly take part in the Remembrance Day events, while the school band performs at the annual miners' picnic to recognise the area's mining heritage. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop a sense of social responsibility by organising an annual Macmillan coffee morning to raise money for the charity.
- Funding from the government to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used successfully to enable pupils to benefit from the expertise of a specialist physical education teacher. Pupils have access to a range of sports, including tennis, tag rugby, multiskills and dance. In 2016, over 60% of pupils took part in after-school sports clubs and the uptake in activity places has increased from 56 in 2014 to 130 in 2016. This funding has also contributed to the training of the lunchtime supervisory team on the active playground initiative from September 2016.
- The school receives effective support from a school improvement partner who provides a termly review of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The school also works alongside local authority partners to check standards and strengthen provision.

Governance of the school

- The chair of the governing body has worked with the school improvement partner to develop expertise and increase her capacity to hold leaders to account. She regularly attends monitoring meetings with the school improvement partner to check pupils' progress, particularly since the transition to a primary school.
- Governors have responsibilities for particular aspects of the school's work and provide reports on areas such as safeguarding in their records of visits. Governors receive regular updates on pupils' progress. They have received training on how to track pupils' progress in the context of the new assessment systems and this has strengthened their capacity to hold leaders to account.
- Governors check the use of additional funding to support pupils supported by the pupil premium. They supported the more expensive appointment of an experienced early years teacher in order to ensure that disadvantaged pupils would receive the best possible start to their education and rapidly address any differences in knowledge and skills from the earliest possible stage.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that training is up to date for staff and for members of the governing body. The school has a specially trained teaching assistant who provides emotional support for pupils.

- Appropriate checks are made on the suitability of adults working at the school. Leaders work closely with other agencies to support pupils' welfare. Any concerns over pupil welfare are swiftly addressed and the school has effective links with external partners, although, in some cases, these concerns are not as swiftly documented.
- Leaders have acted decisively to support pupils with a mixture of active lunchtimes and contrasting opportunities for quieter, more reflective time for more vulnerable pupils. While some pupils said that there were some incidents of bullying, all pupils felt that teachers were highly effective in addressing this. All the pupils I talked to felt safe. Pupils have a good awareness of the actions they can take to stay safe, such as the actions they can take to stay safe online and avoid the threats posed by strangers.
- All of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire or in writing felt that their children were safe and praised the quality of care provided by the school. A number of parents described the effective way the school has dealt with parental concerns and one praised leaders for their 'sensitivity and compassion'. Another parent wrote: 'The school keeps me informed regularly of any concerns about my children and holds regular meetings with me about their progress. They work with other agencies to ensure that my children have the best education/life possible.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan learning effectively, with tasks that engage the whole class and address the needs of particular groups of pupils. Teachers build regular opportunities for pupils to consolidate and secure their learning.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge that they use to build pupils' understanding in mathematics and their reading skills in English. Teachers and teaching assistants have developed pupils' reading abilities with increasing success in recent years, with consistent improvement in the numbers reaching the required standard in the phonics screening check. Additional support for weaker readers is increasingly effective. For example, all of the pupils who failed to reach the expected standard in 2015 reached it in 2016. Pupils I listened to used decoding strategies to help them understand less familiar words, although some less-able pupils remain less fluent.
- Teachers use a range of effective strategies to help pupils to understand concepts in practical ways. In mathematics, pupils regularly use practical activities with number blocks and grids to explore mathematical ideas, before engaging with questions in more abstract ways in their books. Pupils respond well to these approaches, which help them to understand and visualise mathematical ideas.
- Teachers have introduced new 'stretch and fix' sessions to address misunderstandings in mathematics and provide opportunities for pupils to work at deeper levels. While there is evidence that these approaches are making pupils more secure in their understanding, there is less evidence that increasing proportions are clearly working at greater depth.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and plan and intervene accordingly. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive group and individual support that enables them to engage more fully with their learning and

catch up with their peers. Pupils and parents value this support, which is supporting progress, although, on occasions, these pupils can be too reliant upon this support.

- Teachers set up clear routines to encourage positive learning behaviour and, as a result, pupils are quick to settle to tasks. Teachers use a range of strategies to help pupils to remember key definitions, such as gestures to represent different parts of speech. Teachers use questioning to probe pupils' understanding of word meanings and of the rationale behind their answers. In a Year 4 class, such questioning helped pupils to understand why a topic paragraph could not start with a pronoun.
- New assessment tracking systems are enabling leaders and teachers to track pupils' progress over the year. As a result, teachers address underachievement more swiftly by modifying their teaching or organising additional support and interventions. Teachers provide feedback in line with the school's policy.
- The most able pupils are often stretched through additional challenges in mathematics and with more in-depth explorations of texts in initiatives such as 'Fiction Friday.' While teachers are building increasing challenge into the curriculum, pupils do not consistently have opportunities to work at greater depth.
- There is evidence of challenge in the teaching of topics such as forces in science, although this is not consistent, and teachers' expertise is not consistently evident in the work in books in all subjects, including geography and history.
- Pupils are given opportunities to develop their writing skills in a range of styles and this is often reflected in their star writing books. Overall progress in writing is good and, in 2016, pupils achieved outcomes in spelling, punctuation and grammar that were in line with those seen nationally. However, on occasions, boys do not respond to teachers' guidance on paragraphing and standards of handwriting and spelling can vary across year groups.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders place considerable emphasis on pupils' social and emotional welfare through the themes they explore in assemblies and an ongoing focus in lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. A teaching assistant is trained to provide support for pupils' emotional needs.
- Pupils' physical well-being is promoted through a 15-minute daily mile walk or run and through increasing opportunities to take part in planned activities in the playground at lunchtimes. Pupils are encouraged to take part in sporting activities through sports clubs, including tennis and football tournaments and residential visits to outdoor pursuits centres.
- Pupils are able to discuss personal safety and the actions that the school has taken to help them keep safe. They demonstrated a good awareness of how to keep safe online and how to avoid the dangers posed by strangers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers encourage clear routines in lessons and support pupils in making transitions between tasks. Pupils respond to teacher directions swiftly and move about the building responsibly. Incidents of low-level disruption are extremely rare.
- Leaders have introduced new strategies to promote positive behaviours. In 2015/16, a series of initiatives were introduced to promote positive engagement at lunchtime. Teachers and teaching assistants now provide a range of clubs in school and planned activities in the playground, including skipping and hula-hooping. As a result, behaviour at lunchtimes is more positive and purposeful.
- School leaders are working work closely with parents and educational welfare officers to support and challenge groups of pupils who have higher rates of absence. As a result of these interventions, attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are beginning to rapidly improve, although they remain well below other pupils nationally, and they are more likely to be absent than their peers.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects. This is evident from the work in pupils' books and their learning in lessons.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in the phonics screening check has risen consistently over the last three years to above that seen nationally.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard at key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics combined was in line with the top 10% of schools nationally. This achievement was particularly impressive as this was the first cohort of pupils to sit key stage 2 assessments. Pupils' overall progress was in line with that seen nationally.
- Key stage 1 outcomes have improved continuously over the past two years and pupils are making much stronger progress. In 2016, the proportion of pupils of all abilities to reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with or above that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth was below that seen nationally, although over a third of pupils had special educational needs and/or disabilities and therefore progress overall remained good.
- Effective teaching and tailored support are helping pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make progress and catch up with their peers. A number of these pupils are also disadvantaged and benefit from individual and group interventions in school and support from external agencies. These pupils are making progress from often much-lower starting points but at a slower rate than their peers.
- Current progress information shows that, in many subjects and across the majority of year groups, disadvantaged pupils are making improving rates of progress and differences are continuing to diminish. In many year groups, disadvantaged pupils are often making stronger progress than their peers. This builds upon the outcomes in

2016, when their rates of progress and attainment were very close to other pupils nationally. Increasing proportions are now working at greater depth, although variance remains in this area and gaps persist in their accuracy with spelling, punctuation and grammar.

- The most able pupils are often stretched through additional challenges in mathematics and reading. At key stage 2 in 2016, the proportions working at greater depth were above those seen nationally in reading and writing but slightly below in mathematics. At key stage 1, their very good outcomes in reading were offset by weaker progress in writing.
- In key stage 2, pupils' outcomes in 2016 provided them with an understanding of reading, writing and mathematics that prepared them well for secondary school.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and abilities that, in a number of areas, are below those typical for their age. As a result of thorough planning and effective teaching, children make good progress and achieve levels of development that are above those seen nationally.
- Teachers and teaching assistants develop a close understanding of children's interests and needs through dialogue with parents and children and a close observation of children's learning. In a mathematics session, a teaching assistant closely observed children's responses to their teacher's prompts and questions to gauge their understanding.
- Children are encouraged to explore ideas in practical ways to enhance their understanding. They counted their ears, hands and fingers in increasingly demanding ways to gain an understanding of doubling numbers.
- In addition to teacher-led activities, children have many opportunities to explore the indoor and outdoor environments in order to develop their own interests and curiosity.
- Children were keen to talk about aspects of their learning. After reading about the gingerbread man, they discussed the models they had made in clay and subsequently baked their own gingerbread men.
- In the Reception class, teachers prepare children well through a growing focus upon literacy and numeracy skills that children practise in their books. This work complements the wider learning evident in children's learning journals.
- Teachers monitor children's progress closely and record this accurately. Ongoing observations of learning are supported by more formal periodic assessments. These records confirm that children make good progress from their starting points. Teachers have an accurate picture of children's abilities and learning and this was confirmed by the local authority moderation of children's outcomes in 2016.
- Safeguarding practices in the early years are effective. There are no breaches in statutory welfare requirements. Children are supported and cared for and teachers and teaching assistants are attentive to their needs. Effective support enabled disadvantaged children to achieve outcomes that were above other children nationally

in 2016.

School details

Unique reference number	122178
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10000861

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jackie Rowell
Headteacher	Julie Hall
Telephone number	01670 812 369
Website	www.stakeford.northumberland.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@stakeford.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	September 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school expanded from a first school to a primary school in September 2014.
- Stakeford Primary School is smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the

minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed learning in a wide range of lessons, covering all classes in the school. The headteacher accompanied the lead inspector on a number of these observations.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the assessment coordinator and the subject leaders for literacy and numeracy. The lead inspector met three governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement partner and met the local authority primary school commissioner. He also talked to a group of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, lunchtimes and playtimes.
- The lead inspector examined the quality of work in a wide range of books. He discussed pupils' work and their learning with them in lessons.
- The lead inspector looked at the school's work and considered documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and information relating to pupil achievement and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector took into account 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, five free-text responses from parents and seven responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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