

Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School

St Edwards Drive, Stow-on-the-Wold, GL54 1AW

Inspection dates 10–11 June 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.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in all year groups. Their progress is particularly rapid in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils leave the school having reached above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. An above average proportion reaches the higher levels in the national assessments in Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good and is the major reason for pupils' good progress.
- Teachers are particularly good at planning for the range of ages and abilities in their classes and ensuring that all are provided with good levels of challenge.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and are a significant element in helping pupils to progress, particularly but not exclusively for those who find learning more difficult.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. The school's procedures for keeping pupils safe are particularly rigorous and are outstanding.
- Pupils are keen to do well in class and work hard. They are courteous, caring and respectful and, when they are playing outside, they are considerate of the needs of others.
- There is a strong drive for continuous improvement, very ably led by the headteacher. Teamwork is a key part of the school's success and all staff plays their part in the process of development.
- Governors have a good range of expertise and offer very good support. They have very good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Systems to improve the quality of teaching are extremely rigorous and are effective.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as rapid as that in reading or mathematics.
- Pupils do not have sufficient assistance in developing their ideas and vocabulary before they tackle a writing task.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 10 lessons, all of these jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector met informally with parents at the beginning and end of the school days and analysed the results of the 29 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at its self-evaluation, development planning and policies and procedures, including those relevant to keeping pupils safe.
- The inspector evaluated the school's information on the progress that pupils are making.

Inspection team

John Eadie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Pupils are grouped into five classes, one for Reception and Year 1, one for Years 1 and 2, and one each for Years 3 and 4, Years 4 and 5 and Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority) is broadly average.
- A very large majority of pupils is from White British backgrounds. There are a few pupils from a variety of minority ethnic groups and some of these speak English as an additional language, but none are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school shares its site with a children's centre and a privately run nursery, which did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing by helping pupils to develop their ideas and improve their vocabulary before settling to a task.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children's levels of skills and knowledge when children start in Reception are broadly typical for their age. They make rapid progress in Reception and many have reached above average standards by the time they start in Year 1.
- This good progress continues through Years 1 and 2 and there is an improving trend in results in recent years in the assessments in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- In the national screening check for phonics (the sounds that letters make) in 2013, a broadly average proportion of Year 1 pupils reached at least the expected standard. Almost all of those pupils who missed the standard last year are now working at well above expected levels and the large majority of pupils now in Year 1 are also working at above expected levels.
- Good progress continues in Years 3 to 6 and this progress is particularly rapid in reading and mathematics. Pupils read confidently and enjoy a wide range of books and reach above average standards in reading by the time they leave.
- Progress in writing is not as strong as the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to plan their writing before they tackle a task and develop their ideas and vocabulary. The school has put in place procedures to address this, which are beginning to have an effect. Pupils' progress in writing is better this year than it was last, although still behind that in reading and mathematics.
- A significantly higher than average proportion of pupils achieves the higher levels in the national assessments in Year 6. This is indicative of the levels of challenge provided for the more-able pupils through the school. As a pupil put it, 'we enjoy the challenging work that we are given, it is not too hard or too easy.'
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as their classmates, and in some cases this progress is remarkably good. This is because of the clear identification of their individual needs and the high quality of the support they are given.
- Additional funding is used well to support eligible pupils. It is effective and the gap between their performance and those of their classmates has closed as they make good progress. However, there were too few of these pupils in Year 6 in 2013 to comment on their performance.
- The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, make the same good progress as their classmates. This is because there are good procedures to ensure that they can quickly overcome any difficulties that they may have and join in with all class activities.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good through the school and there are examples of outstanding practice.
- Teachers are particularly good at planning for the range of ages and abilities in their classes. This means that all pupils make good progress. They have opportunities to work with others of similar ability, regardless of age, so ensuring that they make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching is stimulating and engaging and pupils say that their lessons are interesting. This was confirmed during the inspection when pupils were seen thoroughly engaged when they were investigating solid shapes in mathematics or exploring more interesting alternatives for 'said' in writing, for instance.
- Teaching assistants are very well qualified and skilled and play a key part in aiding pupils' progress. In particular, their support for pupils who find learning more difficult is a major factor in enabling these pupils to make good progress.
- Marking is thorough and pupils say that it gives them a clear indication of how they can improve their work. Pupils are given time to act upon teachers' marking and this helps them to put into practice the advice given. Pupils appreciate their targets for next steps in learning and say that

these help them to know what they need to improve and learn next.

- There are occasions when teachers do not give pupils sufficient time to develop their ideas and build their vocabulary before tackling a writing task. This means that pupils are not making sufficiently rapid progress in writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, their parents, staff and governors all said this. Pupils are polite and welcoming and are considerate when working in groups or when playing. They are respectful of adults and relationships at all levels are very good.
- Pupils are keen to succeed in class and work very well in pairs or small groups. They work hard and concentration levels are good, with very few instances of pupils not focused on the task in hand.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and procedures to keep them safe are extremely rigorous. They have a very good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, both around the school and in the wider environment. All parents who responded to Parent View agreed that their children feel safe in school.
- A very small minority of parents expressed the opinion on Parent View that bullying is not dealt with well. However, pupils said that bullying is rare and very minor and dealt with very well when it is reported. Meticulously-kept records confirmed this view that incidents are rare and minor and dealt with very effectively. Pupils are well aware of different types of bullying and were able to speak knowledgeably about the dangers inherent in the internet for example.
- Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the few pupils from minority ethnic groups are fully integrated and welcomed. Pupils were surprised when the inspector suggested that those of other ethnicities might experience problems, saying, for example, 'We all treat each other as friends.'
- Pupils make a very good contribution to the school, expressing their views about the appointment of new staff, for example. They are also involved well in the local community, having a close relationship with the Royal British Legion and attending their parades for instance.
- The school's strenuous efforts to promote attendance reflect their concern for individuals, and have kept it at average levels.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership for the school. She is very ably supported by all the staff and teamwork is crucial to the success of the school. A member of the support staff commented, 'I have been made to feel part of the team from day one.'
- This effective team is very well supported by governors and has brought about a number of good improvements. However, not all these have had a full impact, for instance pupils' progress in writing has still not caught up that in reading and mathematics.
- The drive for improvement in the quality of teaching has a high priority. Checking on its quality is rigorous and visits to classes are shared among the leadership team, who each take one of the teaching assistants with them on their visits. This is not only effective in improving the quality of teaching, but also in building the team.
- There are very close links with a local group of small schools and this enables training to improve teachers' skills to be shared. This has meant that a very good range of training, closely focused on the needs of individuals and the school, has maintained the drive for continual improvement of the quality of teaching.
- The group has employed a parent support adviser, who has been very successful in arranging support for several families from a range of agencies. There are very good links with the onsite

nursery, which ensures a smooth transition for young children when they start in Reception.

- There are very effective links with parents, almost all of whom were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school. There are also very good links with the local community. The pupils benefit significantly from these links. For instance, during the inspection a team came in from a local church to present an assembly. The pupils were gripped by the story told and this made a good contribution to their spiritual development.
- Central to the school's values is equality of opportunity. For example, the school has successfully planned a range of subjects and topics to provide a very broad range of rich and memorable experiences so that pupils are prepared very well for the future.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Relationships at all levels are excellent and a strong sense of community is encouraged. Pupils know right from wrong and make the right choices. They manage their own behaviour well and are given plenty of freedom to do this.
- Pupils are aware of their own culture, for example through links with Appleby in Cumbria where a horse fair is held, as happens in Stow. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to extend their cultural awareness, for instance through the links with a school in Zimbabwe. On their own initiative, pupils have donated a range of items to send out to this school including footballs and clothing.
- Funds are managed very carefully. For example, the additional funding is used well. It is focused very clearly on the needs of eligible pupils and is effective in accelerating their progress. The school has also organised its budget to enable five classes to be maintained, so enabling smaller teaching groups.
- The new funding for primary sport has been planned for well. Expert coaches have been brought in to work alongside teachers and also to provide extra activities after school. This has enabled pupils to enjoy new sports such as hockey. These initiatives have benefited pupils' health and well-being and pupils say that they particularly enjoy the wider range of sporting activities available.
- Safeguarding procedures are very thorough and pupils are kept safe.
- The local authority has not had a great deal of involvement other than at the school's request. For example, it has been particularly effective in providing training for governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory. Committees have been reorganised and training has improved their ability to support and challenge the school very well. The governors understand very clearly what the strengths and areas for development of the school are and know the key questions to ask. A major reason for this is that, three times a year, governors come into school for the entire day. Half the day is spent in their meeting, while for the rest of the day they attend lessons and other activities. Governors provide very good levels of challenge to leaders. They seek the views of pupils and parents regularly. Governors compare pupils' achievement with what is found nationally, using the information about how well pupils are doing. They are fully involved in making sure that good progress is made in improving the quality of teaching and in raising standards. Governors carefully track the effectiveness of additional funding and know whether it is making enough difference. The setting of targets for teachers is effective and, where appropriate, closely linked to progression through the pay scales.

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	115540
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	439958

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	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trudy Bartlett
Headteacher	Rebecca Scutt
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2009
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