

Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

Broad Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6HN

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction that is fully supported by staff, parents and governors. This has a positive impact on teaching and raising standards. The school therefore has a strong capacity to continue improving.
- Pupils make good progress and reach well above average standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good. Effective assessment procedures identify any pupils falling behind their peers, including disadvantaged pupils, and they are given swift, effective support to catch up.
- Provision for the early years is outstanding. The Reception and Year 1 classes work together in an exemplary fashion to make learning interesting and prepare pupils well for Key Stage 1.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe and well cared for and make a positive contribution to the school and wider community.
- The curriculum provides a good range of activities within and beyond lessons to promote the pupils' health, fitness, personal development and academic progress.
- Governors are very effective. They are working closely with the headteacher to establish a new leadership team and ensure staff pay reflects their contribution to school improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation is not fully shared by all leaders.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate their skills in practical ways across subjects.
- Pupils do not yet have secure understanding of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classrooms to observe lessons, talk with the pupils about their work and look through their books. Most of these activities were undertaken jointly with either the headteacher or acting deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors heard some pupils read and observed pupils’ behaviour during playtimes, lunchtime and at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Meetings were held with members of staff, groups of pupils and four governors. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The responses of 47 parents to Ofsted’s online survey were taken into account alongside comments made to the inspectors by parents before and after school. The views of staff were also taken into account, including 16 completed staff questionnaire returns.
- A range of documents was examined, including safeguarding policies and procedures and records of the progress of past and current pupils.

Inspection team

Peter Kerr, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marion Lloyd	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is two per cent. This is low compared to most primary schools. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is three per cent. This is also low compared to most primary schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the additional funding known as the pupil premium is about one in ten. This is below average. In this school, this additional funding is allocated for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A permanent headteacher was appointed in September 2014 following the resignation of the substantive headteacher in December 2013 and a series of temporary arrangements that began after that date.
- The school meets current government floor standards which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the new senior leadership and management team so that:
 - rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning is fully shared by all leaders and managers
 - best practice is spread throughout the school
 - oversight of the impact of the curriculum on pupils' achievement and personal development is effective.
- Improve the quality of pupils' learning by increasing opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate skills in practical ways across subjects.
- Ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding and appreciation of the range of beliefs and cultures that reflect life in modern Britain.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The quality of leadership is good. Staff and governors share a strong commitment to improving teaching and promoting good behaviour so that pupils can flourish and achieve their full potential.
- The headteacher has brought a renewed sense of direction to the school, something which is appreciated by a good number of parents. They said that the atmosphere in the school has greatly improved and expressed confidence that the headteacher would secure continuing improvements.
- The headteacher, in close co-operation with the acting deputy headteacher, is building up a good overall picture of the quality of teaching, including through regular visits to classrooms. She has a clear insight into the areas that could be improved, such as the fact that pupils do not apply their skills practically across subjects.
- Other members of staff holding posts of responsibility have had limited opportunities to contribute fully to school improvements over recent terms. This is now changing with the establishment of a new leadership and management team.
- The quality of the new curriculum that the school is putting in place for 2014 is good. Leaders are working with advisers and other schools in the area to establish an efficient system for assessing the progress and attainment of pupils from term to term, and to use this information to plan suitable work for them.
- The school generally provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies encourage the pupils to reflect on spiritual and moral values and they have many opportunities to engage in local community activities. However, conversations with pupils reveal that the curriculum has not yet been fully effective in ensuring that pupils gain a secure understanding of the various cultures and beliefs that make up life in modern Britain. The school had not previously identified this gap because it had not been a focus of curriculum monitoring or planning.
- The school successfully promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relationships and ensures that there is no discrimination on any grounds. Positive attitudes toward difference are strongly encouraged. For example, during an assembly, pupils in Years 4 to 6 were urged to follow the example of Nelson Mandela in learning foreign languages so that they could 'speak to the other person in their own language'.
- The school uses the pupil premium effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Care is taken to identify any reasons why particular individuals may be falling behind and the money spent on helping them catch up. Most of the support goes on interventions to help them make up any lost ground in English and mathematics.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and are effective in ensuring that pupils feel safe and well cared for and that parents feel that their children are in safe hands.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used effectively to extend the range of activities on offer to the pupils to learn new skills and to keep fit and healthy. This is done through the employment of specialist coaches that teach directly and from whom the teachers learn new coaching skills. Provision for swimming has also been enhanced with the effect that many more pupils learn to swim competently before leaving the school.
- The local authority has supported the school effectively during an extended period of significant changes in senior leadership. It helped the school to secure the services of an executive headteacher, giving the governors the space and time they needed to appoint a new headteacher of their own choosing. This has contributed positively to the current feeling of optimism in the school and confidence in current leadership and management arrangements.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have established a very effective team. They put to good use their wide range of expertise in gaining an insight into the workings of the school and holding it to account for the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils. They played a pivotal role in maintaining the school's good performance during the recent hiatus in senior leadership.
- Governors visit the school regularly, talk with staff, observe activities and report back to the full governing body with their findings. They are aware of the quality of teaching in the school and have played a key role in eliminating any under-performance. They are actively seeking ways of rewarding good teaching and promoting ambition among staff.
- Performance management procedures are well-established and effective. Currently the governors are embarking on a new round of performance management interviews to establish a new leadership team that reflects current school requirements and the professional development needs of all staff.
- Governors have a good grasp of the available data on pupils' progress and make sure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can. They pay particular attention to the progress of disadvantaged pupils and ensure that the pupil premium is used effectively to raise attainment for this group.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. During outdoor playtimes a good range of games, including table-top quiet games as well as more energetic activities such as climbing and football, keeps pupils purposefully occupied. Playground rules are on display and pupils say that people follow them 'most of the time'. Supervisory staff encourage co-operative play and quickly deal with any low-level misbehaviour that occurs from time to time.
- Pupils say they appreciate the 'peaceful problem solving techniques' board that is available to help them settle minor disputes and they know who to turn to with more complex problems. During lunchtimes, behaviour is good and pupils appreciate the friendliness of the lunchtime staff, whom they say help them a lot.
- Behaviour in lessons is consistently good. Pupils listen to instructions and sustain concentration on their work. They enjoy working together, particularly on practical projects, and appreciate learning from each other. They particularly enjoy the range of visits and other activities that are provided to enrich their learning. Year 4 pupils, for example, were very excited to be visiting a long barrow during the inspection and talked enthusiastically of their recent visit to the Rollright Stones ancient monument.
- Occasionally, the level of pupils' interest and enthusiasm falls because they are not highly enough motivated by the tasks in hand. This was observed in a writing lesson, for example that the boys were initially less enthusiastic than the girls to settle down to their task, though they did not misbehave. They knew that practical tasks would follow the writing, but would have preferred it the other way round.
- Pupils are proud of the contributions that they make to the life of the school, for example, as school councillors or representing the school on a team. They are also proud of the work they do within the local community.
- Attendance is consistently high, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are confident that the school cares for them and keeps them safe. They have a good understanding about how to reduce risk to themselves in a range of situations both within and beyond school, including safe use of the internet. All the respondents to the Parent View questionnaire agreed that their children feel safe in school. Three quarters of them strongly agreed.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take and are confident that members of staff will listen and deal quickly with incidents that arise. They say that bullying is very rare

and school records confirm this.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan lessons well in each year group to ensure good coverage of each subject, particularly English, reading and mathematics. They make sure pupils know when they have succeeded in the lesson and mark pupils' work regularly so that pupils know how well they are doing over time.
- All teachers have high expectations and plan lessons that systematically build on the pupils' previous learning. Good team work between teaching assistants and teachers makes a strong contribution to the pupils' learning.
- All aspects of English and reading are taught well. Teachers all convey an enthusiasm for reading and ensure that pupils read as often as possible and have the support they need to read fluently.
- Teachers encourage pupils to speak correctly and this has a positive impact on their writing. Much of pupils' written work is of a high standard in content, style and neatness.
- Mathematics is taught well, with an emphasis on number skills. Lessons cover all other aspects of the mathematics curriculum, but there are relatively few opportunities for pupils to extend their learning in practical ways by applying their skills in different subjects.
- Outstanding teaching was evident in Year 6. Pupils were encouraged to explore and use their own ideas to write myths, create paintings and build mathematical models to reflect aspects of the ancient Maya civilisation to a background of Mayan music. This successfully promoted rapid and enjoyable learning in English, mathematics, art history and music.
- Sometimes lessons do not provide sufficient variety to capture pupils' interests and challenge them to think creatively and apply their skills practically across different subjects. This slows their progress.
- Teachers plan a range of visits and visitors that stimulate the pupils' interest and enthusiasm and add greatly to the relevance and quality of their learning. Year 5 pupils, for example, gained a great insight into the effect of the Second World War in the local community by talking with residents of a local care home who had lived through it.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Attainment is consistently well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 for both girls and boys in reading, writing and mathematics and they are therefore well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Girls generally attain higher than boys in English, especially in writing, to a similar extent as that found nationally. In some year groups, boys out-perform girls in mathematics as they did in the Year 6 tests in 2014. The school keeps track of any gender differences and takes steps to narrow any gaps that develop in particular year groups.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils in each age-group. The majority make good progress and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. In some cases their attainment is above their peers as well as above average. Where their starting points are below their peers, the support they receive enables them to narrow the gap. This means their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics compares favourably with other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally. In 2014 there was little difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and the others in school and both were well above their peers nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well in lessons because the support given

to them helps them to complete the set tasks and challenges them to do as well as they can. Teachers make a point of rotating support for groups so that all the pupils receive support from teachers and teaching assistants. The few pupils in these groups make similar good progress to their peers. Their attainment is lower, but is often at or near the national average by the end of Year 6.

- The most able pupils make good progress and reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. All the pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in Year 2 go on to achieve at least Level 5 in Year 6 with a good proportion achieving Level 6.
- In some mathematics lessons, older pupils showed uncertainty over concepts, especially those related to shape, because they have not had enough practical experiences to consolidate their understanding at earlier stages. Current teachers are aware of this and are taking steps to increase the range of practical activities to support pupils' learning at all stages.
- Pupils keep track of their own learning well. They know their targets and what they need to do to improve. They regularly assess for themselves how well they and their classmates are doing and find this a helpful supplement to the teachers' marking of their books.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The Reception class provides a well-organised, safe and highly stimulating environment which enables the children to make very rapid progress in their personal and physical development, communication skills and all other aspects of the early years curriculum.
- Children join Reception with typical levels of development across the areas of learning. Children are well prepared for the move and settle very quickly, with parents being kept fully informed and involved. Their behaviour is outstanding. They know and follow all the class rules confidently and are so interested in all that they do that staff can fully concentrate on supporting their learning.
- The site is secure and the children feel very safe. They know how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example through following simple hygiene rules and handling sharp implements like scissors safely.
- Highly effective team work between the Reception and Year 1 classes enables older or more rapidly developing children to move on to National Curriculum level work at the right time. It also allows younger or more slowly developing children time and support to securely achieve the early learning goals before they have to move on to Key Stage 1 studies.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. The class teacher has an excellent understanding of the early years curriculum and of how best to motivate children and help them to learn and develop well. She works closely and very effectively with the teaching assistants, students and volunteers in the classroom. This means that all the adult helpers are able to interact purposefully with the children as they play and work, helping them to make the most of all the learning opportunities they encounter each day. As a result, the children love coming to school and are highly independent and enthusiastic learners.
- The outdoor area is used exceptionally well to stimulate the children's imagination and encourage them to cooperate with each other and enjoy learning about the world around them. For example, when a rain storm arrived the children were encouraged to go out and fully experience it. The children spontaneously collaborated to channel the water into an area and build bridges over it. This typifies the creative approach that so successfully the children's responses to their surroundings to support their learning across the early years curriculum.
- The leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. Assessment procedures are very secure. Notes taken by all staff of pupils' responses feed into an assessment of the level they are working at which is used to plan further activities. All this information is shared fully with parents so that they have a clear record of their children's progress.

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	125524
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	449770

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	219
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Chris Cond
Headteacher	Emma Cox
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2010
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