

Stratford-sub-Castle Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Stratford Road, Stratford-sub-Castle, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 3LL

Inspection dates

6–7 June 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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a strong and effective leadership team. They have ensured that the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- The governing body has an in-depth knowledge of the school. It works closely with school leaders to produce well-focused plans for school improvement. Governors challenge school leaders effectively on all areas of school improvement.
- Parents are delighted with the education their children receive. Teachers and pupils are justifiably proud of the school.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan and teach interesting lessons. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and pay attention well. Teachers closely monitor their pupils' progress and give extra help to those who need to catch up.
- Pupils are now making faster progress than at the time of the previous inspection. However, progress in mathematics is still not sufficiently rapid for some pupils. In addition, not enough of the most able pupils are reaching the highest standards in reading.
- Leaders and governors use additional funding effectively to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress from their starting points.
- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start. Well-planned activities ensure that they enjoy their learning and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning are a strength of the school. Pupils are friendly and considerate towards adults and each other.
- Pupils feel safe. Parents have confidence that their children are well looked after. Bullying and bad behaviour are extremely rare.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Teachers should develop the reading skills of the most able pupils by:
 - ensuring that pupils develop a deep understanding of reading comprehension skills such as inference and deduction, and apply these skills in other areas of the curriculum
 - introducing their pupils to a wide range of challenging books and other reading matter, and ensuring that pupils, including the most able, respond to and discuss what they have read.
- Further develop numeracy skills throughout the school by:
 - improving pupils' knowledge of number facts so that they have instant recall to help with their calculations
 - ensuring that pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the mathematics concepts they are learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her deputy are a strong, effective team. Their ambition of achieving high standards and progress in a happy, inclusive environment is shared by staff, governors and parents. All are highly supportive of the school and its aims. An overwhelming majority of parents consider that the school is well led.
- Leaders thoroughly analyse data on pupils' achievement and rigorously check the quality of work in pupils' books. They closely monitor the quality of teaching and planning. They provide good support to teachers to improve their practice while holding them firmly to account for the speed of pupils' progress.
- Leader and teachers discuss the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils regularly. As a result, no pupil or group of pupils is overlooked. Leaders' thorough monitoring has enabled them to identify shortcomings in mathematics teaching and put in place remedial actions that are beginning to improve pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly for the most able pupils.
- School leaders and governors manage the performance of teachers well. They set targets which closely match the needs of the teacher and the school. They provide effective training to help teachers achieve their targets, with the result that teaching is now good.
- The curriculum is good; it is broad, balanced and carefully planned. For example, a topic in key stage 1 on building a raft involved pupils developing design and technology skills, writing instructions, applying mathematics and also taking account of environmental concerns. The school runs a variety of after-school clubs. This includes a homework club where adults are on hand to help out and listen to pupils read.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium appropriately to support disadvantaged pupils; these pupils receive good additional help in class. The headteacher monitors school provision to ensure that disadvantaged pupils participate fully.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. School leaders use staff and resources well to enable these pupils to make good progress from their different starting points.
- Leaders use sport premium funding well. For example, they have ensured that more pupils take part in swimming lessons. As a result, all pupils in key stage 2 learned to swim at least 25 metres last year. A high proportion of older pupils now take part in competitive sporting events while younger pupils have benefited from the 'Change for Life' club that encourages healthy lifestyles. Teachers have had useful training on how to coach football and cricket.
- Pupils' spiritual development is good. Daily assemblies include opportunities for prayer and reflection, and pupils enjoy the experience of singing together which they all join in with great enthusiasm. The assembly seen by the inspector included a discussion of right and wrong following recent national incidents, in which pupils' attitudes were mature and thoughtful. Pupils have good social skills; they listen to each other and to adults and can share and cooperate when using equipment.

- The school teaches British values including democracy and the rule of law. An inspector saw pupils discussing the importance of rules and laws. Pupils could give reasons for which ones they thought were the most important. Pupils know about the importance of democracy, and have opportunities for voting in school.
- The school has received effective support from the local authority since the previous inspection. This has included advice to the leadership team on strengthening its role in order to raise standards, and support for the governing body on how to hold leaders effectively to account.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is good. Following the previous inspection, a review of governance was recommended. Governance is now stronger and governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Governors now have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They fully understand the school's data on pupils' achievement. They challenge school leaders effectively about pupils' attainment and progress, particularly highlighting the progress of different groups of pupils. They carefully monitor the effect that additional funding is having on pupils' progress, for example pupil premium funding.
- Governors work closely with school leaders to produce and monitor plans for development which prioritise effectively the areas which require most improvement.
- Governors are highly committed to the school. They have all received suitable training for their roles. They frequently visit the school to ascertain progress first hand, and to check the accuracy of the information they are given.
- Governors understand and fulfil their statutory duties well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils feel safe. Parents are confident that their children are safe and well looked after. Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities well.
- Staff and governors have received appropriate training in safeguarding, and know what to do if they have concerns over pupils' safety.
- Record-keeping is good and safeguarding procedures are clear. Leaders check that only suitable people are permitted to work in school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive a good level of supervision at lunchtimes and breaktimes, and that the school is a safe environment.
- Vulnerable pupils are well supported and the school works well with outside agencies to provide these pupils with additional help.
- Pupils know how to stay safe online, on the roads, and if approached by a stranger.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan and teach interesting lessons. As a result pupils enjoy their learning, behave well and make good progress.
- Teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that these pupils receive the support they require.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly. They use the results of assessments to check that pupils are not falling behind, or, if they are, to plan steps to help them to catch up.
- Teachers mark pupils' work in line with the school's policy, and pupils have time in class to respond to marking; they told inspectors that this helps them with their learning. Pupils also appreciate the individual tutorials which they have each half term and say that discussing their work with their teacher helps them to improve.
- Phonics teaching is good and lessons are carefully planned to match pupils' differing levels of phonic knowledge. This gets them off to a good start with learning to read.
- While pupils are taught basic reading skills well, not enough of the most able pupils reach the highest level because they are not developing an in-depth understanding of the text or acquiring well-developed skills of inference and deduction.
- Pupils who are fluent readers are not guided by their teachers to make ambitious choices with reading material.
- Standards in writing are high. This is because pupils regularly practise their writing skills across the curriculum, and teachers insist on high standards of writing in all subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection. However, although pupils are making better progress, it is not as rapid as in most other schools. Pupils' progress is slowed by their poor knowledge of number facts, particularly those pupils from lower- and middle-attaining starting points. Sometimes teachers move these pupils on to a new mathematical concept before they have mastered the previous topic. As a result, pupils' learning is not always consolidated or secure.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- This is a caring and inclusive school. Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe and well cared for, and they are confident that any problems will quickly be sorted out by adults.

- Parents say that their children are happy in school, feel safe and are well looked after.
- Pupils who have complex needs and/or disabilities are accepted as valuable members of the school community. An inspector saw pupils helping a disabled boy to express his views, thus showing a considerable degree of maturity and respect.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well supported and given extra help. Pupils who are not supported at home are given extra help in school; for example regular additional reading to an adult ensures that they make good progress and do not fall behind other pupils.
- Pupils develop their independence well, for example through taking part in a residential trip when in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school. There is good liaison between the schools and the opportunity for visits. Pupils who need extra support during this time of transition have a programme to meet their needs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are extremely rare. Pupils report that if any incidents occur staff deal with them quickly.
- In lessons pupils are usually attentive and keen to work. Occasionally when working in small groups outside the classroom pupils do not concentrate so well.
- Behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes is good. Pupils of all ages play well together. In the dining hall pupils sit and chat sensibly over lunch.
- Pupils are proud of their school and of their work. The standard of presentation in pupils' workbooks is generally of a high standard.
- Pupils move around the school in an orderly way. They enter and leave morning assembly calmly and listen and respond attentively to the headteacher.
- Attendance overall is good, and better than that seen nationally. The rate of absence for those with particularly complex needs is higher, due to their specific medical needs.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils in all year groups are making good progress across a range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics, including disadvantaged pupils. Boys and girls make similar good progress. Pupils from military families are making good progress.
- At the end of Year 1 in 2016 the proportion of pupils who had passed the phonics screening check had improved and was in line with the proportion found in most schools nationally. The proportion of pupils who had successfully caught up with phonics by the end of Year 2 has also improved. Current pupils are making good progress in acquiring phonic skills and using these skills in their reading.

- By the end of key stage 1 in 2016, assessments showed that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally.
- By the end of key stage 2 in 2016 pupils made very good progress in writing, similar progress to other pupils nationally in reading, and slower progress than other pupils nationally in mathematics.
- The present Year 6 pupils are working at a higher standard than last year and making faster progress overall. However, although pupils are making better progress in mathematics, for some pupils, particularly those from middle- and lower-attaining starting points, progress is still not as rapid as in other subjects.
- Across the school the most able pupils are making rapid progress in mathematics and writing. Fewer of the most able pupils are making rapid progress in reading.
- Pupils who are behind and need to catch up quickly are well supported and their progress is closely tracked by the school. The majority of these pupils are those who have special educational needs, who make good progress from their individual starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start school with skills and knowledge slightly below those typical for their age. They make rapid progress in the Reception class. As a result, by the time they move on to Year 1 they are ahead of most children nationally. Girls and boys perform equally well in most areas of the curriculum, with the exception of writing where girls are more proficient.
- Teachers and the other Reception class staff know the children well. They assess their knowledge and understanding when they join the school, and again regularly throughout the year. Staff carefully plan activities so that children learn well and are equipped with appropriate skills and knowledge by the time they move on to Year 1. This is particularly beneficial for those children who have special educational needs or those who are disadvantaged.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at developing children's vocabulary and language skills through conversations and questioning. Children are encouraged to express themselves in full sentences, rather than one-word answers.
- Children are encouraged to become independent. While playing at being fire fighters they independently donned their uniforms and then discussed how they were going to use their hoses to put out the fire. They also warned the inspector to stand back as fire can be dangerous.
- Staff ensure that parents are well informed about their children's progress, and they are welcome in school to share the record of achievement with their child. Parents are contacted immediately if there is any cause for concern.
- Parents spoken to in the playground said that arrangements for their children to start school had been good. All would wholeheartedly recommend this school to others.

- The deputy headteacher and class teacher work together closely to provide good leadership to the Reception class. Other Reception class staff have considerable expertise in how to develop children’s learning, which they use to good effect.
- Children’s behaviour is good. They understand the class routines and the behaviour expected of them. Children listen to their teacher and each other. They can share, and take turns using equipment and in conversation.

School details

Unique reference number	126361
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10033130

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Britten
Headteacher	Kay Bridson
Telephone number	01722 327227
Website	www.stratford-sub-castle.wilts.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@stratford-sub-castle.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This school is smaller than most primary schools. Pupils are taught in five mixed-age classes.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than is found in most schools. The proportion with an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs is also high compared to most schools nationally.
- The school population is stable, similar to most schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average.

- A small number of pupils are from service families.
- The school runs a homework club after school.
- In 2016 the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning, looked at the work in pupils' books to evaluate current achievement and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally during meetings, and informally at lunchtime, playtime, around the school and in lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, senior and middle leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the foundation stage leader and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 48 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the comments left by parents. They also spoke informally to parents in the playground.
- The inspectors took account of 19 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including the school's plan for improvement, governing body minutes and records of the monitoring of teaching. They looked at evidence of the tracking of pupils' progress throughout the school. They also scrutinised a wide range of documents relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Janet Maul, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Lees

Ofsted Inspector

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