

Stapleford Community Primary School

Bar Lane, Stapleford, Cambridge, CB22 5BJ

Inspection dates 26–27 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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 make good progress from their different starting points. Standards are consistently well above those expected by the end of Year 6.
- Progress is particularly strong in reading, partly due to effective and much improved teaching of early reading skills, and in mathematics. In addition, high quality work was observed in science, art and design, geography and history.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium, make good progress due to the quality of help and guidance they receive.
- Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to learning. They say they feel safe in school and have good relationships with adults. Many have above average attendance.
- The best teaching has a good pace and teachers' effective questioning means pupils are fully involved. Lessons are often well-organised and resourced. Many of the teaching assistants offer good quality support for pupils.
- The headteacher and governing body have provided strong, effective leadership since the last inspection. These improvements have had a positive impact on teaching and learning and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing, although often above those expected, remain lower than those in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers have recently begun to find more opportunities for pupils to write at length. However, this practice is not yet consistent in all classes.
- A small number of lessons are characterised by pace that is too slow. At times the lesson is too teacher-led and does not involve pupils in practical activities and independent learning.
- Teachers do not always set work that fully provides the most-able pupils with sufficient challenge.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons and parts of lessons. Many of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, pupils, staff, parents and two representatives of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were looked at carefully. Some pupils read books with the inspectors.
- The inspectors analysed and took account of the 72 responses to the online survey (Parent View) as well as a number of letters from parents.
- In addition, 27 staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspectors looked at key inspection documents, including performance data produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, self-evaluation work, reports to the governing body and the school improvement plan.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Litawski

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- Stapleford Community Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. There are a range of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds but very few who do not speak English as a first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A below-average proportion of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A pre-school setting, and before- and after-school clubs, shares the school's site. These are privately managed and inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - extending and securing recent changes made to the teaching of writing
 - making sure all pupils have sufficient opportunities to write at length and for different purposes.
- Make more of the teaching outstanding by:
 - making sure lessons have sufficient pace and pupils are able to take a more active part in learning and develop their independence
 - providing activities that offer sufficient challenge to the most-able pupils
 - spreading the excellent practice that currently exists.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically start in the Reception class with levels of knowledge and understanding at least in line with those expected for their age.
- The school's results in the 2012 Year 1 reading check were slightly below average. The school reacted quickly by reorganising the teaching of linking letters and sounds (phonics) and in Year 1 by grouping pupils by their prior attainment. Because of this, the teaching is better targeted at their individual needs.
- This has been so successful, and aspects of the teaching so effective, that other teachers have visited the school to observe lessons as good role models. The current pupils in Year 1 have rapidly improving skills and have already reached levels well ahead of those from last year's national results.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are regularly above or well above average and pupils make good progress. The current Year 2 pupils are making progress that is better than that expected, especially in reading and mathematics where an above-average proportion reach the higher levels. However, fewer pupils are currently working at higher levels in writing.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently significantly above average and improving in English and mathematics. In addition high quality work in art and design, history and geography was observed during the inspection. Pupils in Year 5, for example, discussed the ways animals adapt to different habitats in a very knowledgeable and mature way.
- Currently the school's data show that in Years 3 to 6, progress is better than that expected in reading, writing and mathematics. More pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach the higher levels in reading and mathematics, and double the number from last year on track to reach Level 6 in mathematics which is the level expected of a typical 14-year-old.
- Although often good, progress in writing is slower than that in reading and mathematics. Recent improvements to the teaching of writing are yet to have a significant impact on outcomes. Not all teachers provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length and for a range of purposes.
- The 2012 national test results show that the small number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium attained standards that were about two terms behind the other pupils in reading and writing but much further behind in mathematics. However, this gap has narrowed significantly. This is a result of the additional support these pupils receive. Currently they are making more rapid progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics and they are reaching similar levels of attainment.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported. There are no marked differences in the achievement of different groups, including the very small number from a minority ethnic background.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- The quality of teaching has improved rapidly since the last inspection. This has been the result of more effective monitoring and the management of teachers' performance, and the extremely positive way the school has developed some newly or recently qualified teachers. Because of this, although mainly good, more of the teaching is now outstanding and is having an excellent impact on pupils' learning.
- The school has made good use of further training in, for example, literacy and mathematics, and this has led to more rapid progress. This is supported by the effective links made between subject areas, such as those between art and design, geography and history in work on the Aztecs.
- Where the teaching is not yet consistently good it is because the teacher talks for too long and pupils remain too passive in their learning. The pace of lessons slows and some pupils lose interest. In a small number of lessons the most-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the activities or by teachers' questioning and they are not provided with tasks that encourage independence or require them to be more actively involved in their learning.
- In most lessons, however, teachers plan activities that are supported by a stimulating range of resources so that pupils are interested and enjoy their work. For example, in an outstanding Year 1 phonics session the teacher provided a wide range of learning activities that required pupils to work together, alone or with an adult, and which challenged their reading skills and understanding of a soft 'g' sound extremely effectively.
- Teaching assistants often provide very effective support to teachers and pupils, particularly when working with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The relationships between adults and pupils are consistently strong and supportive and this encourages pupils' participation in learning. The marking and the way teachers provide feedback to them on their work has a good impact on helping pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- In the Reception class, children's progress in learning basic skills is supported through well-chosen resources. Effective use is made of the outdoor areas to provide opportunities, many of which are intended to appeal to boys' learning, and which build on the classwork. Currently, for example, the role play outside is related to the work on animals and safari based on the current topic.

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

- The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good and inspectors found them a pleasure to talk to as they happily discuss the work they do and the positive feelings they have about being at this school. Teachers manage pupils well. Strong and positive relationships are established with children when they start in Reception. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in lessons. In Year 5, for example, pupils listened to each other with interest during a debate on who should be allowed on the lifeboats of the 'Titanic'.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school, in assembly and at break and lunch times, is good. Where issues have arisen in the past they have been appropriately dealt with and the majority of parents and carers say the school manages behaviour well. Pupils are polite and considerate to others, including visitors. A good system of rewards and sanctions means that any issues that may arise are quickly dealt with in a positive way. In the majority of classes this system is used consistently.

- Attendance is broadly average when compared with similar schools. For most pupils it is above average but a small minority of persistent absentees have a very negative impact on the overall figures. The school takes all appropriate steps, including using legal measures, to encourage regular attendance.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school, and this is supported by the views of almost all the parents and carers. A very large majority said their child was happy at the school. Pupils say that there is no significant bullying, but are confident that if any did occur it would be dealt with well by the staff. They are very knowledgeable about different types of bullying especially regarding new technology. Pupils trust the adults and would share any concerns or worries with them.

The leadership and management are good

- At the last inspection the leadership was found to require significant improvement to ensure teachers were supported and challenged, and that teaching quality was more closely monitored. The governing body and headteacher have worked hard and successfully to create an effective senior leadership structure over the past year. This has had a very positive impact on provision and pupils' achievement throughout the school.
- A significant minority of parents and carers have concerns about leadership and changes to the staffing. The concerns are unfounded and the strong leadership now shown, and the way it is devolved among more staff, is the reason for the current picture of good quality teaching and good achievement.
- A major strength has been the appointment and development of newly and recently qualified staff, who are proving to be high quality practitioners. Other changes to staffing are for appropriately valid reasons including promotion. Many of the parents and carers made positive comments about events held at the school and the involvement of staff in out-of-school activities.
- The school has detailed strategic and improvement plans. These give the school a clear set of aims for further improvement. The morale of staff reflected positively in their responses to questionnaires which show that the large majority are proud to work at the school. Staff are positive about the school's vision of 'Aspire, Challenge and Discover.' The work of senior leaders since the last inspection shows that the school has a strong capacity to continue improving.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders monitor teaching and learning effectively by observing lessons, and checking pupils' work. The progress made by pupils in the school is tracked in detail and newly introduced regular meetings regarding pupils' progress are held so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and tackled.
- Any weaknesses identified in teachers' performance are now tackled robustly. Focused training in areas such as writing and leadership skills has ensured that more of the teaching is at least good and a growing amount is outstanding. The challenging targets set for teachers are based appropriately on raising standards and the priorities in the school improvement plan, as well as for their individual professional development.
- The local authority has supported the school very effectively since the last inspection. Regular support for leadership and to help teachers improve their work has been put in place. Detailed action plans have been regularly monitored and adjusted to see that improvements build sustainably on earlier work. Links to another successful school have provided a range of support and guidance for staff. Appropriate training for staff and the governing body has been provided.

- The funding available through the pupil premium is used effectively to help the small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals to take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources and adult time. The progress made by these pupils is closely monitored by the headteacher and the data clearly indicate that gaps in attainment are narrowing. Other groups are also closely monitored to ensure equality of opportunity
- The school has developed a good creative curriculum that makes appropriate links between subjects to make learning more meaningful. Resources and the environment are well used, as was observed in the Reception class when they visited the school's wild area, 'The Moat', to create some very effective artwork using natural materials. This is a small part of the way the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has worked hard since the last inspection to address the leadership issues raised and make sure the school improved. New governors have had appropriate training and the local authority has provided specific governor support to ensure they can hold the school to account. Governors now do this effectively. Regular visits to the school help give governors a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses. Their improved understanding of the data helps them track pupils' progress more closely. A good structure of committees means their work is efficiently carried out. Governors have a clear picture of teaching quality and any issues surrounding teacher performance. They understand how targets are set for teachers and how the school deals with any underperformance. Governors have made good decisions over the spending of the pupil premium. They check the impact on pupils' progress carefully to ensure best use of this funding. The governing body makes sure that all national requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met.

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	110619
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	408863

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	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lucy Carrick
Headteacher	Claire Turner
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2012
Telephone number	01223 508720
Fax number	01223 508721
Email address	office@stapleford.cambs.sch.uk

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