

Studfall Infant School and Nursery

Rowlett Road, Corby, NN1 2BP

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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 reach average attainment in both English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1.
- The school is highly inclusive and, as a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well, as those who require additional support, make good progress from their varied starting points.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school and some teaching is outstanding. Lessons are fun and promote positive attitudes to learning.
- Good practice has been introduced to make sure everybody agrees about how well pupils are doing.
- Staff manage the behaviour of all pupils consistently well. As a result, pupils feel safe and behave well.
- Leaders and managers make clear their high expectations to all staff and have ensured that teaching is consistently good. The governing body checks the work of the school alongside staff.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching in each year group.
- Pupils are not always clear how to improve their work from marking and feedback.
- Attendance is below average.
- Achievement in Reception is not as strong as it is in the Nursery or in Key Stage 1.
- The teaching of letters and sounds is not at just the right level of challenge for all pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 27 lessons taught by 18 teachers and visited a number of other lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff and a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector also met with a group of governors, which included the new and previous Chair of the Governing Body.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and the inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the online Parent View survey, observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including pupils' books, monitoring and assessment information and teachers' records, planning and pupils' reading records.
- Minutes of meetings, reports written for the governing body and monitoring undertaken by them were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Angela Kirk, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Jones

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Studfall is much larger than the average-sized school. Since 1 September 2012, it joined with Studfall Junior School to become a hard federation, sharing a newly formed single governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body, who already held that position in the junior school, was elected the week prior to the inspection.
- Two new headteachers of the federated schools began work on 1 September 2012. The appointed headteachers were previously the joint headteachers at the junior school.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs for up to 16 pupils. Currently, this includes pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder or a hearing impairment.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is high.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is high. The vast majority of these pupils have speech, language and communication needs.
- Most pupils are White British, with a few pupils from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A few of these speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above most other schools. This provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, especially in Reception, by:
 - sharing best practice with other staff
 - ensuring that marking and feedback are easily understood by the pupils and help them to improve their work
 - ensuring that the learning of letters and sounds (phonics) is at exactly the right level to challenge every pupil
 - increasing the challenge for children in Reception when they are working on independent tasks.
- Improve attendance so that it is at least average by monitoring attendance closely and tackling unauthorised and persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points that are below those expected for their age on entry to Nursery and Reception, pupils make good progress across the school to achieve average levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave. An average proportion across all groups of pupils make better than expected progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and recently have started to achieve average levels by the time they leave Reception. However, sometimes independent activities in Reception are not challenging enough to help children make the best progress because they are too similar to those in the Nursery.
- The learning and progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to their peers. They achieve well because their learning activities are at just the right level and the adults who work with them offer good support.
- Pupils in the specially resourced provision are integrated fully into classes and supported ably by skilled adults who are fully aware of how best to support them. Staff are trained to support specific individual needs, for example, to provide British Sign Language signing for hearing impaired pupils.
- Additional teaching in small groups or individually for pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium, is well organised and monitored to ensure that it meets their learning needs well. Achievement is good for pupils who speak English as an additional language. This is because teachers plan well for them and there is often additional support in class from an adult who particularly focuses on the development of their spoken and written English.
- Pupils read widely and often. For example, Year 2 pupils are able to talk about the books written by their favourite authors and discuss the personalities and physical appearance of some of the characters.
- Reading for comprehension is organised well across the school and pupils' reading is tracked carefully and linked well to pupils' targets for improvement. However, some pupils' understanding of letters and sounds has not developed rapidly enough because activities are not set at just the right level for them. The new headteachers have identified this and have started to reorganise how phonics is taught.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' planning is clearly based on what pupils already know. Most activities, with the exception of phonics, are usually at the right level of challenge so pupils learn well. This includes the pupils who are supported through the specially resourced provision as teachers are also skilled at ensuring the right additional adult help to match the learning for those pupils in their class.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are able to make good progress towards their individual targets because teachers provide appropriate materials, equipment and support.

- Teachers' questioning of pupils is good. Suitable questions for differing abilities of pupils are identified on their planning so that these can be easily introduced into the lesson at the appropriate time. In an outstanding lesson which taught pupils how to recognise and deal with their feelings in a positive way, the teacher's questioning led to perceptive answers from pupils about why someone might feel sad.
- Occasionally, teachers do not pick up pupils' errors quickly enough in lessons, for example in phonics, or use these to correct misconceptions.
- Teachers use other subjects to develop pupils' literacy, information and communication technology and mathematics skills. For example, pupils made outstanding progress in a combined information and communication technology and history lesson in using specific techniques to create a castle, because the teacher's excellent subject knowledge resulted in very high expectations of work and engagement being achieved.
- Teachers write comments to help pupils improve their work but these are not always well focused on what the particular strengths or next steps are for the pupils and they sometimes find them difficult to read. As a result, marking and feedback are not having the best impact in helping pupils to accelerate their progress.
- The assessment of pupils' achievements is a strength across the school. Pupils' profiles of achievement are compiled outlining evidence from reading, writing and mathematics. This system in the Early Year Foundation Stage is extended across all areas of learning and every adult evaluates children's learning on a daily basis, sharing children's successes with other staff and with parents and carers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They respond well to their teachers and to the other adults who work in the school. Pupils share equipment readily, listen to each other's views and ideas and support each other when working in a group.
- At play and around the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils' good behaviour ensures that snack and mealtimes are calm, playtimes fun and the atmosphere is cheerful and orderly.
- Pupils say they feel safe, and have an understanding of types of bullying appropriate for their age. Pupils are confident that the adults help them when they have a problem and, although pupils were able to identify that the behaviour of some pupils could occasionally be better, overall they felt it was good.
- Discussions with pupils show that they are polite and well-mannered to each other and to adults.
- Attendance is below average because not enough was done in the past to tackle absenteeism. This term, the new headteachers have introduced a monitoring system which tracks pupils' attendance more regularly and triggers actions by the school and other professionals to help support the child and the family to improve attendance levels.

The leadership and management are good

- The two new headteachers have high expectations of achievement, teaching and behaviour. They have quickly identified the areas for development within the school and introduced accurate and realistic self-evaluation.
- Senior and middle leaders have undertaken effective monitoring of a number of key areas of the school. A particular strength is the monitoring and tracking of different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who are supported by the pupil premium. The school uses its pupil premium funding to provide regular additional teaching, individually and in small groups, which supports pupils' good progress.
- Leadership and management of the specially resourced provision are good because leaders ensure that pupils' individual needs are met fully. Pupils' achievements are carefully tracked and additional guidance given to teachers and teaching assistants who work with individual pupils to ensure that they have the skills necessary to help these pupils achieve well.
- Teaching has been monitored by leaders and managers to check how well individual teachers are teaching and to support their professional development. However, until recently, there has been insufficient sharing of best practice to help teachers develop their teaching from good to outstanding.
- Given the low response on Parent View, inspectors also reviewed the responses from parents and carers to a school questionnaire sent out in March 2012, which had a much better proportion of responses. Both surveys indicated that parents and carers were happy with all areas of the school. They felt that their child was safe, taught well and happy. Parents and carers indicated that the school was well led and managed and responded well to any concerns they raised.
- Leaders and managers have used performance management well as a tool to improve teaching further and accelerate pupils' progress. At least one of each teacher's targets relates to a specific area of achievement common to the whole school, ensuring an effective link between teachers' professional development and whole-school improvement. This year the expectations of teachers' performance have been raised still further.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding its children are met. Equality and inclusion for all are at the core of the school's ethos. As a result, discrimination is effectively tackled and the school is a positive, secure environment for young children.
- The school's curriculum is well planned and appropriate. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, particularly in helping them to develop confidence, self-esteem and their ability to work cooperatively with others.
- The local authority provides effective light touch support to this successful school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has effective committees which are extremely well attended and report back to the full governing body about the school's progress on its key priorities for improvement

- is involved in first-hand monitoring to enable governors to check on the robustness of systems across the school
- is sufficiently knowledgeable about the school to be able to provide a good level of support and challenge.

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	121810
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	395361

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rena Glithero
Headteacher	Kim Kirchin and Louise McGeachie (joint headteachers)
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2008
Telephone number	01536 264540
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