

The Stoke Poges Primary School

Rogers Lane, Stoke Poges, SL2 4LN

Inspection dates 18–19 October 2012

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is consistently above average and rising.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning are excellent.
- Pupils are very well cared for and kept safe.
- Teaching is good with examples of outstanding practice.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, drives school improvement well.
- The curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs and is enhanced effectively by a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- The governing body monitors the work of the school closely and ensures the school responds promptly to national initiatives.
- Links with the local community are strong and contribute much to pupils making good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, the work is not matched closely enough to the needs of pupils working at different levels.
- Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively to support learning.
- Marking in mathematics does not routinely provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- The measures by which the school development plan can be evaluated are not precise enough.
- Newly appointed phase leaders have still to develop their roles and to contribute fully to accelerating pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons of which four were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and the local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan. They heard some pupils in Years 2 and 6 read.
- Inspectors took account of the 59 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to inform the inspection process.

Inspection team

David Wynford Jones, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Janet Maul	Additional inspector
Sibani Raychaudhuri	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Approximately half of the pupils are of White British origin. Other pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being of Indian or Pakistani heritage.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is high. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action and at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are below the national average.
- Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A much lower than average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the current floor standard which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- In September 2012, the size of the middle management team was increased with the creation of the role of phase leaders, who take responsibility for different age groups throughout the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring all teachers consistently make effective use of assessment information to plan work that is closely matched to the needs of pupils with different levels of ability
 - making certain that marking in mathematics provides pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work
 - giving teaching assistants a clearer role in supporting learning at the start and end of lessons.
- Improve the leadership of the school by:
 - developing the roles and responsibilities of the newly appointed phase leaders
 - refining the school development plan to include precise outcomes, linked to pupils' attainment and progress, by which the actions can be evaluated.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. In the past, pupils made better progress in mathematics than in English. This is no longer the case because of the school's focus on improving standards in writing.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is consistently above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children settle well into the Reception class, grow in confidence and quickly establish good relationships with each other and adults. They make at least the expected rate of progress in all areas of learning.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing their speaking, listening and reading skills well. They read at a level appropriate for their age and ability. They use phonics (the sounds that letters make) and clues in the text confidently to read unfamiliar words. Pupils write for a range of purposes. They use a reasonable range of vocabulary and use basic punctuation accurately.
- In mathematics, pupils are developing their understanding of number well and use a suitable range of mathematical terms to explain their thinking. Year 6 pupils are confident in exploring number. For example, in one lesson pupils were fully engaged in an activity based on the television programme, 'Countdown'. They eagerly awaited the computer generated figures to appear and immediately set to work to solve the problem.
- Pupils read well and are knowledgeable about their favourite authors. They can explain why they chose certain books and which ones they would recommend to their friends.
- Pupils write at length. Simple and complex sentences are well written and most pupils are developing their skills in writing paragraphs. However, throughout the school, many pupils' handwriting skills are still not good enough.
- Pupils enjoy all subjects and many attend the numerous well-organised after-school activities which help them acquire good skills and knowledge, for example in physical education, sport and music.
- Girls tend to do slightly better than boys in reading and writing. All other groups, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium funding, make equally good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching, with some that is outstanding, is the norm within this school. Teachers in parallel classes plan lessons together well. As a result, there is consistency in provision. Teachers are clear about the purpose of the lesson, most planning is detailed and appropriate activities and outcomes for pupils of different abilities are identified.
- Teachers routinely explain what pupils are going to learn in each lesson. Nearly all lessons proceed at a quick pace. Teachers ask carefully phrased questions to probe pupils' understanding and to generate discussion. Good use of 'talk partners' enables pupils to share their ideas and to develop their social skills well.
- Teachers encourage pupils to become independent readers, make choices and read regularly. They ensure that the pupils develop their reading skills well. However, pupils say that some teachers do not hear them read as often as they would like.
- Potentially vulnerable pupils, disabled and those identified as having special educational needs receive good support and are fully included in class activities. The work in most lessons is reasonably well matched to their needs. In the occasional lesson, the work is sometimes too hard for some pupils who find learning difficult and sometimes more-able pupils find it too easy. This is because teachers have not checked carefully enough how much pupils already know in order to plan work that is just at the right level for them.

- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils when they are working in groups or independently. This helps pupils to make good progress. However, most teaching assistants are not involved enough in supporting learning at the start and end of the lesson when the teacher is talking to the whole class.
- Marking in pupils' writing books is detailed and provides pupils with clear guidance on how to reach their challenging targets. In contrast, in mathematics, marking is not as sharp and targets are not as explicit.
- Changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage framework are being implemented well. The outdoor area is well resourced and used effectively to support learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' exemplary behaviour and positive attitudes to learning contribute much to their good progress and the development of their social skills.
- Pupils are polite. They welcome visitors and are keen to talk about all the good features of the school, for example the interesting lessons, the range of extra-curricular activities and the opportunities to undertake responsibilities. Pupils take a pride in the environment and ensure that displays and equipment are treated with respect.
- Pupils from different cultural and minority ethnic backgrounds get on exceptionally well together. Incidents of bullying of any kind, such as name-calling, fighting, racial, religious and cyber-bullying, are very rare. Pupils say that if an incident occurred, it would be dealt with quickly and fairly.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have a very good understanding of potential dangers, for example when using computers to access the internet or when undertaking activities in gymnastics and on the games field.
- Pupils' attendance continues to improve and is well above average for primary schools.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together well. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Working closely with subject leaders and the governing body they have moved the school forward since the last inspection. The school has the capacity to improve further.
- The school development plan is based on an accurate evaluation of the school's performance and correctly identifies the key areas for development. However, most of the measures by which the success of the actions can be evaluated are not precise enough or linked closely to pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher undertake regular observations of teaching and learning. The results of tests and assessments are analysed and used effectively to discuss pupils' progress in the termly meetings held with teachers. Staff are keen to improve their teaching skills by attending courses and working closely together. The headteacher uses this information appropriately to help the governing body decide if teachers should be paid more.
- The newly appointed phase leaders (those teachers taking responsibility for the coordination of different age bands of pupils) have embraced with enthusiasm their new role and the challenges it brings, but have yet to make a significant contribution to improving pupils' progress.
- The curriculum captures the pupils' interest and supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There is an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. The breadth of the curriculum and the enrichment through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities are strengths of the school.
- Links with the local community are strong and contribute much to pupils' academic and personal development.

- In 2011/12 the additional funding of about £1,500 to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium was allocated and monitored appropriately by the headteacher. The money was spent on additional support staff who worked with individual pupils to ensure they learned as well as others in the class. As a result, these pupils made good progress.
 - The local authority identified the school as needing minimal support. As a result, there has been little contact. Organisational changes have led to the recent allocation of a new adviser. A date has been set with the governing body to evaluate the headteacher's performance.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is developing its skills well in checking the work of the school and in challenging the leadership team. A governor, with a statistical background, undertakes an in-depth analysis of the outcomes for pupils and presents the information in a way that all can understand. Governors regularly visit the school and are developing their expertise through regular attendance at courses.
 - The finance committee monitors expenditure carefully. Members are aware of the additional funding through pupil premium and are satisfied that it is being spent appropriately.
 - The governing body responded promptly to the recent changes in teacher appraisal and capability procedures and ensured the updated policy was in place for the start of the autumn term.
 - The school meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils and governors support the headteacher in ensuring that pupils and staff are safe and free from harm.
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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	130328
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	403612

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	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Smith
Headteacher	Malcolm Bridges
Date of previous school inspection	25 March 2008
Telephone number	01753 643319
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