

Stokenham Area Primary School

Stokenham, Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 2SJ

Inspection dates 24–25 October 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Strong leadership from the executive headteacher, supported by the governing body, the head of teaching and learning, and the staff has led to significant improvements, particularly in teaching and achievement.
- Joint staff training and collaboration by leaders within the federation with two other local schools have contributed strongly to the improvements.
- Pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 is now outstanding, regardless of their starting points and of any special educational needs. Attainment is high with a marked improvement in English in 2012.
- Children make an excellent start in Reception. Progress is improving rapidly as a result of the high-quality teaching and care they receive.
- Teaching is outstanding and pupils' learning is checked carefully so that work is at the right level. Pupils are absorbed in their work. Marking indicates clearly how to improve but pupils do not routinely respond to deepen their understanding of points for improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they flourish within a very caring and supportive environment. Pupils report they feel very safe in the school.
- Pupils benefit from a rich range of activities in all the subjects and develop skills in literacy and numeracy particularly well.
- Procedures for checking how well the school is doing are very thorough and provide an accurate view of strengths and areas for development. The impact of actions taken is checked very effectively.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the executive headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised examples of pupils' work and other materials displayed in all classrooms and around the school.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, including the Chair, and with various staff, including the head of teaching and learning and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the online Parent View survey and of the school's own survey of the views of parents and carers conducted in July 2012 when 31 responded.
- They also looked at key documents including the school's plans for improvement, the governing body minutes, the school's own data on pupils' progress, records relating to the school's own assessment of how well it is doing, behaviour and attendance, policies and procedures for safeguarding and work in pupils' books.
- The views of staff were also considered through scrutiny of 19 completed questionnaires.
- One of the other schools in the South Hams Federation, Loddiswell Primary School, is being inspected at the same time as Stokenham with a separate report.

Inspection team

Grahame Sherfield, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Simms

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stokenham is a small school that serves a mainly White British community from the village and the surrounding area.
- The school is part of the South Hams Federation of three primary schools. One of these, Loddiswell Primary School, has joined the federation since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and need extra help is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding in this school for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below that found nationally.
- More pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times than in most schools.
- The school meets the current government floor standards that set minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pre-school provision on the school site is managed by two independent organisations and not by the governing body. These are subject to separate inspections and the most recent reports can be found on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking to support them in consolidating their understanding of what they need to do to improve, exploring for themselves the best ways of doing so and establishing a continuing dialogue with their teacher about how to do better.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- In all lessons observed, pupils responded very well to varied activities that were carefully designed to engage them in their work. As a result, they maintained impressive concentration. Relationships with staff were very good and behaviour usually outstanding.
- Children's skills and knowledge when they start school in Reception vary from year to year but are broadly at expected levels for their age. Outstanding teaching, careful checking of children's work and excellent behaviour and relationships have led to significant improvements in progress, particularly in children's personal development and their understanding of the sounds letters make. By the end of Reception, standards are above those expected, and rising.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average and improving, particularly in reading. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is high. Progress in mathematics has been significantly better than that achieved in most schools for several years. As a result of strong leadership and better teaching, progress in English is now similar to that in mathematics. Inspection evidence and the school's own data indicate that this improvement is being sustained and pupils are learning exceptionally well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. This is because their needs are carefully identified and additional support is provided where required.
- The school has been very successful in closing the gaps in attainment between certain groups of pupils and their peers. For example, those known to be eligible for additional government funding achieved better in reading and mathematics than pupils as a whole in 2012.
- Pupils who join the school at other than the usual time in Reception are carefully monitored and supported where necessary. As a result, their achievement is similar to their classmates.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The determined efforts of the executive headteacher and the head of teaching and learning to secure the best possible teaching have resulted in significant improvement.
- There is an impressive consistency in teachers' high expectations, underpinned by detailed planning. This is regularly adjusted in the light of how well pupils are doing to make sure that work is always at the right level. Lessons involve interesting activities that readily catch pupils' attention and help them to rise energetically to the challenges presented by their teachers.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and used very well to prompt pupils to think. Questioning is used skilfully to check understanding and adjust learning during lessons as appropriate. All the classrooms provide engaging displays to support pupils' learning, particularly in English and mathematics, to which teachers and pupils often refer.
- The pace of learning is brisk, purposeful and builds very effectively on previous work. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson on a 'descriptive opening to a scary story', pupils were able to draw on work on an engaging text and a 'story walk' undertaken earlier in the week. This meant pupils were well placed to respond to the teacher's high expectations and worked quickly and effectively.
- Teachers mark work frequently and carefully, setting out clearly what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve. Pupils report that they find this helpful. Although pupils are invited to reflect on what they have learnt during a lesson, they are not asked to respond to the points for improvement that their teacher's marking has given them. For example, by providing some more effective adjectives or adverbs, or trying another calculation in mathematics, to consolidate understanding.
- Teaching makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly in supporting them in reflecting, working very well together and

listening carefully to others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school, well mannered and polite. They enjoy the warm and friendly atmosphere that is apparent throughout. A notable feature is the way pupils care for each other, for example older pupils helping the younger ones at break and lunchtimes.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare and instances, mostly name-calling, are tackled effectively by the staff. The school's behaviour records confirm this picture and show that any misbehaviour is dealt with effectively. Older pupils are well informed about contemporary issues, such as cyber-bullying and the dangers that might be encountered online.
- Pupils in need of a little extra help are very well cared for and the school makes good use of the support of other agencies as appropriate. Provision for pupils with disabilities or with special educational needs is very effective.
- Attendance has improved significantly as a result of the school's vigorous action to promote its importance and is now above average.
- All of the parents and carers who completed the Parent View survey and of those who responded to the school's questionnaire think that their children feel safe at school and almost all are positive about the standard of behaviour. Inspection evidence supports these views. A small minority completing the Parent View survey had concerns about bullying. Inspection evidence indicates that the few minor incidents are tackled effectively.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership of the school is exceptional. The executive headteacher, supported by the head of teaching and learning, has a clear vision for the continuous improvement of the school for the benefit of its pupils that is widely shared.
- Her quiet determination has resulted in the effective recruitment of new staff and in sharing strengths across the federation so that what the school offers its pupils is to the highest standard possible. Staff leading subjects and aspects gain from sharing approaches with colleagues in the other two schools and from learning from each other. For example, Stokenham teachers and pupils have benefited from the expertise in art and design of a teacher in another federation school.
- Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing. This includes a highly effective, systematic review of teaching and learning as well as weekly scrutiny of teachers' planning and regular visits to every classroom. A notable strength is the way these reviews lead to action for improvement and include a focus on pupils who might be at risk of not doing as well as they should. The school improvement plan is detailed and supported by a clear calendar of staff training and activities to check on progress with improvement priorities.
- Setting targets for teachers is robust and linked with the new Teachers' Standards. Targets are fully integrated with wider school priorities, salary progression and the training of staff. Strengths in teaching are identified clearly and sharing these is promoted through planned observations by teachers of colleagues at work in their classrooms.
- The subjects taught make a very strong contribution to the development of pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, geography and history provide opportunities for various types of writing, while in science older pupils have good opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in mathematics. Pupils benefit from the good range of extra-curricular activities that include two residential experiences open to pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils are well prepared

for life in modern democratic Britain and benefit from the school's link with a school in South Africa and a developing relationship with another in a contrasting area in the West Midlands. The school vigorously tackles any discrimination in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony.

- There is a good range of partnerships with other establishments beyond the federation, for example through the local learning community in sport and mathematics. The partnership with parents and carers is strong. All those responding to the Parent View survey would recommend the school to other parents and carers.
- The local authority provides appropriately light touch support for this very successful school. The school has purchased important services, including its School Improvement Partner and advisory support, that have made a positive contribution to its improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes a strong contribution to the school's improvement through holding the executive headteacher to account effectively for the performance of the school. Members of the governing body have undertaken appropriate training, for example on the different information available on pupils' attainment and progress. They are therefore well placed to ask suitable questions of the data presented to them by the executive headteacher and others and, as a result, are well informed about pupils' progress. The governing body has a clear picture of the quality of teaching and a good grasp of how targets set for teachers and checking progress with improvement priorities promote improvement. The governing body has endorsed spending most of the additional pupil premium funding on teaching assistants providing extra help for pupils and is well aware that information on pupils' progress shows the positive impact of this decision.

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	113223
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	408936

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	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Greaves
Headteacher	Sue Jezard
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 December 2009
Telephone number	01548 580551
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