

# South Stanley Junior School

Tyne Road, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 6PZ

**Inspection dates** 20–21 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics. The gap between those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and all pupils nationally is too wide.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent and not enough is good or better. Some teachers do not expect enough of pupils; lessons move along too slowly, work is too easy and teachers do not change work during lessons if it is too easy or too hard for pupils.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to improve their writing and mathematics skills by practising them in different subjects.
- The curriculum does not always contain work that is hard enough or suited to pupils' ages or abilities; there are too few opportunities for pupils to see how learning in different subjects can link together.
- Target-setting does not tell pupils clearly how to take the next steps in their learning.
- Information about pupils' progress is not used well enough to provide leaders with a clear understanding of how much progress pupils are making in different classes.
- Some leaders are new to their roles and their ability to plan improvements and to check that they are working is not yet strong enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- There is much good, and some outstanding, teaching that interests pupils and helps them to make good progress, especially in Years 5 and 6 and for the more able pupils in Year 3.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. The system to teach phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is clear and helps pupils read unfamiliar words and to enjoy books.
- Senior leaders have a clear understanding of how to improve the quality of teaching and to raise pupils' achievement. Together with the governing body, they have taken decisive action to tackle weak teaching.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' behaviour is good; they say they feel very safe. Attendance has improved.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors had meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school’s improvement plan; the school’s data relating to pupils’ progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and the school’s documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons taught by six teachers and listened to a group of pupils read. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher conducted five joint observations of lessons with the inspectors. The inspectors also observed senior leaders reporting back to teachers on their findings regarding the quality of learning and pupils’ achievement in lessons.
- The inspectors met some parents informally at the start and end of the school day. They took into account the three responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and those in the school’s own survey of parents.
- Fifteen staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

## Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anne Humble

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well above average.
- There are on-site breakfast and after-school clubs, which are managed by the governing body.
- In 2011 and 2012, the school failed to meet the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The headteacher has been in post since March 2011.
- There have been significant changes to staffing and staff absences since the last inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the summer of 2013, improve the quality of teaching to at least good, in order to raise pupils' attainment and to accelerate their progress, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
  - sharing the good and outstanding practice that is in the school already
  - developing teachers' skills and confidence in re-shaping learning during individual lessons
  - using the school's information about how well pupils are working to set tasks which are hard enough for all pupils and require pupils to work at a quick pace
  - improving the quality and quantity of the work pupils do in some lessons
  - improving target-setting so that pupils know clearly how to take the next steps in their learning
  - offering more opportunities for pupils to improve their writing and mathematics skills by practising them in different subjects
  - ensuring that work is appropriate to pupils' ages and abilities, becomes harder as they grow older and helps pupils to see how subjects link together.
- Increase the impact that leaders at all levels have on pupils' attainment and progress, by:
  - improving the school's procedures for checking pupils' progress so that leaders and class teachers plan work that ensures pupils are making at least good progress
  - improving the skills of those leaders who are new to leadership roles through effective use of training to help them continue to improve and offering them greater accountability for pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Most pupils start school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age. In 2011 and 2012, pupils made inadequate progress as a result of weak teaching. Too few pupils attained the nationally expected standards in tasks and tests at the end of Year 6, in English and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence shows that the school has acted decisively and effectively to get rid of the weak teaching. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 and the more able pupils in Year 3 now make good progress because of good teaching. Teachers have identified the most able pupils in these year groups and are setting them harder work.
- Less-able pupils in Year 3 and pupils in Year 4 are now making the progress expected of them but not enough do better than this in writing and mathematics. This is because teachers do not require pupils to work quickly enough in lessons and the work set is often too easy. Improvements in teaching have not gone on long enough to be fully effective and so, for example, too many of these pupils get away with producing small amounts of work of only adequate quality.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. This is a result of good teaching of how to link sounds and letters, and a drive to help pupils enjoy books and read more in school and at home.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those with special educational needs reached standards below those of similar pupils nationally in the most recent tests. Although they make similar progress to other pupils in the school, the gap between them and all pupils nationally is too wide.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Some is good and, on occasion, outstanding especially in Years 3, 5 and 6, but elsewhere the pace of learning is often too slow. While there are good examples of teachers making sure that work set is at the right level, they do not all plan work well enough to get the best out of all pupils. Too often they fail to reshape work during lessons in the light of pupils' growing knowledge. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils practised how to read an analogue clock. Many pupils were able to do the work easily and the teacher did not change the work when she realised this. In the follow-up lesson, the teacher acted upon the headteacher's feedback and planned a lesson which interested and stretched all pupils. This clearly shows how the headteacher is able to improve teaching.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and this marking helpfully tells pupils how successful they have been in their work and how to improve. However, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 know the level of their work, pupils do not in all classes have clear targets which will help them take the next steps in their learning and reach the next level.
- The curriculum offers too few opportunities for pupils to develop their mental mathematics and calculation skills or to practise their mathematics skills in real-life, problem-solving activities. While pupils do a lot of writing in history, they do not do enough writing in other subjects. Books which contain pupils' written work show that pupils are now making expected progress in writing, but they do not write at length often enough to make progress consistently good.
- Where teaching is good and outstanding, teachers make lessons interesting. They use exciting topics, allow pupils the chance to talk together to plan their ideas and they give them the time to concentrate on their writing.
- In an English lesson with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, pupils were excited by a film extract about sailors and carried out drama exercises to give them ideas for writing. This linked to the work pupils were doing in history about the Spanish Armada and helped them to see the links between subjects, as well as improve their writing. Such good examples are not consistently

evident in all classes.

- Another clear strategy that has improved reading and is beginning to improve writing is the use of stories to give pupils ideas for writing. For example, the reading of *The Gruffalo* in Year 3 was used to encourage pupils to write descriptions of creatures.

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

- Pupils are happy in school and enjoy their lessons when they are excited by their learning. Occasionally, there is some restlessness when the work is less stimulating or pupils have to listen to their teachers for too long. They respect one another, work and play well together and are very polite to adults.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good in lessons and any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by teachers. Indeed, much excellent behaviour was evident in lessons observed and around the school during the inspection.
- Inspectors analysed the school's records of behaviour, which showed that it is consistently good. This is as a result of the successful use of clear expectations of how pupils should behave. The few pupils who find it hard to behave well are helped by clear rules. As a result, the number of exclusions has dropped.
- Pupils feel very safe and they are aware of different forms of bullying. They say that any form of bullying, including cyber-bullying, is rare and when it does happen they are confident that it will be dealt with quickly. They know that older pupils, as well as the teachers and other adults in school, will help with any problems.
- Playground buddies and the Job Squad help pupils play safely and enjoyably together and they develop social skills in the breakfast and after-school clubs. Pupils say that the school council listens to their concerns and ideas. It has agreed school rules with teachers and members talk to school leaders on safety issues that worry pupils.
- Attendance is average. It has improved rapidly as the result of a strong effort by the school to work with parents and pupils.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- In a relatively short time, the headteacher has had a significant impact on improving the school. She has been successful in ensuring that pupils now make expected progress in writing and mathematics and good progress in reading. This is as a result of a clear understanding of how to improve teaching and a determination to get rid of weak teaching.
- However, pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of teaching still require improvement. Improvements to teaching, based on regular lesson observations and clear advice from senior leaders and the sharing of good and outstanding practice, have not gone on long enough to be fully effective.
- While all leaders are clear about what needs to be done to make the school better, some leaders are new to their roles. They are still to develop skills in planning improvements and checking that they are successful. They do not have enough accountability for pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- The headteacher has introduced systems so that teachers are clear about the level of pupils' work and can check their progress. However, these are not simple or effective enough so that any shortfalls in pupils' learning can be spotted and tackled quickly.
- In the past, staff have been rewarded even when their pupils have not done as well as they should have done. The headteacher has ensured that performance management is now clearly about raising attainment and improving the quality of teaching. Expectations of progress have been raised.
- Funding has been used to improve the basic skills of those pupils eligible for the pupil premium. This has not been fully effective. In recent tests, these pupils did less well in comparison with similar pupils nationally and the gap in how well they do remains wide between them and pupils

who do not qualify for the pupil premium.

- Programmes which have been introduced to improve reading are helping pupils to read better. However, there are some remaining weaknesses in teaching which stop all pupils making good progress in other subjects. While this illustrates the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination, not enough is yet being done to close the gap in achievement for all pupils.
  - At times, the curriculum is uninspiring because it does not offer work that is hard enough or well-matched to pupils' ages and abilities. There are also too few opportunities which help pupils to see the links which can be made in learning in different subjects. However, there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness, and to appreciate the natural world and the wonderful things, such as music, art and literature that humans have created.
  - The local authority has provided successful support for the teaching of mathematics and English and has helped the school to gain a clearer view of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievement. Such advice has started to improve teaching and pupils' attainment and progress.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body has acted strongly to improve its skills and has introduced clear procedures to hold the school to account. Governors carry out routine monitoring to evaluate the impact of the pupil premium funding on pupils' performance. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. The governing body has improved its effectiveness through a deliberate decision to offer greater challenge to the school. Together with the headteacher, they have taken decisive action to tackle weak teaching. However, improvements in the way in which the governing body holds the school to account have not gone on long enough to be fully effective.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114031
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	401400

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	160
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carol Jackson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Eileen Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01207 232059
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