

Stuart Road Primary School

Palmerston Street, Plymouth, PL1 5LL

Inspection dates 5–6 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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 throughout the school. Over the last three years, standards have risen steadily. In 2012, Year 6 pupils attained just above average standards and current pupils are on track to do even better. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those supported by extra funding, make at least good progress.
- Teaching is good, and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of and for their pupils. Lessons successfully encourage pupils to try hard and to enjoy learning.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. There is a particular strength in the way they support each other and in the way they contribute to the school community. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school.
- Highly effective leadership by the headteacher has been key to the improvement of teaching and learning. His clear vision and determination to move the school towards excellence are shared by staff and governors. Every effort has been made to improve the education provided. Teachers' performance is managed extremely well and their training is given high priority. Resources, such as the pupil premium, are used well to improve the achievement of pupils for whom they are intended.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although a good number of pupils make better than expected progress, there is room for more to do this.
- The curriculum is good, but not yet fully promoting outstanding learning and progress.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day’s notice and took place over two days.
- The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation 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 for tracking pupils’ progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and a range of the school’s documentation, including that relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, listened to two groups of pupils read and made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- The headteacher conducted two joint observations with inspectors.
- The inspector met some parents and carers informally and looked at results of the school’s parental questionnaire. There were 32 responses from parents and carers to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken into account, as were 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rowena Onions, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

George Long

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- An above average proportion of pupils is eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The majority of pupils are White British with the others coming from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A smaller than average number of pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a unit that includes Nursery and Reception children.
- Due to circumstances beyond the school's control, many governors, including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body are new to their roles this term.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- A breakfast and after-school club runs on the school site but is not managed by the school's governors. It is subject to a separate inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of pupils who are making greater than expected progress by:
 - adapting teaching during lessons to fully take account of the information gained from the ongoing checking of pupils' understanding and progress
 - ensuring that all marking is precise in showing pupils exactly what they need to do to improve their work and by always giving them opportunity to act on this advice.
- Move the quality of the curriculum from good to outstanding by:
 - increasing the opportunities pupils have to apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects and in a variety of contexts
 - developing the provision for outdoor learning for children in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress from an entry point that is frequently below expectations. They make particularly good progress in learning to work and play together and with adults. Achievement has accelerated over the last two years. Further progress is inhibited by a lack of facilities and opportunities for the children to work and learn out of doors.
- There is a marked improvement in rates of progress and standards throughout the school. This has been most rapid in Years 3 to 6. As a result, 2012 standards in Year 6 were above average in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing. Standards continue to rise, especially in writing. Although improvement has taken a little longer in Years 1 and 2, there is now robust evidence that a clear emphasis on the development of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics is paying off. Year 2 standards are well on track to be above average this year.
- A renewed focus on the teaching of phonics (the link between sounds and letters) has ensured good early progress in reading. Consequently, the youngest pupils demonstrate good skills when reading new words. Standards in reading in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Year 6 pupils read fluently and widely, with good levels of understanding.
- Rigorous use of information about pupils' levels and achievement means that the school is very aware of the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Any differences in progress are quickly identified and acted upon. Interventions have been very successful. For example, as a result of efforts to make sure that they stay interested in lessons, boys in Key Stage 2 very often make greater than the nationally expected progress in reading and mathematics. This is also the case for many pupils who are eligible for free school meals, many disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Because the school supports well other minority groups, such as those with English as an additional language and those from service families, these pupils make at least good progress. The school has worked hard to ensure good progress for all, but is now rightly ambitious to ensure that all pupils make outstanding progress.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning, knowing that they have to push themselves to attempt difficult and demanding work to enable them to make good progress. When given the opportunity, they apply literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects. These opportunities are not, however, sufficiently systematically planned to ensure cross-curricular work plays a full part in further raising achievement. As a result, achievement is good rather than outstanding.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. There is an increasing proportion that is outstanding. The gradual improvement in teaching has had a direct impact on raising standards.
- Teachers try hard to motivate pupils. Practical demonstrations of a target concept help with this, as when pupils acted out the beginning of a play to help them distinguish the spoken and written elements of a play script. Good use is made of technology to make explanations clear, for example to provide pupils with a visual image of what happens when numbers are multiplied by 10, 100 or 1000.
- Teachers use detailed knowledge of the attainment of different groups and individuals in their class well to plan activities that have a good level of initial challenge. This ensures good progress in lessons. Effective assessment skills mean that teachers are aware of how well pupils are doing during the lesson. However, there are occasions when teachers do not act swiftly enough on this knowledge to adapt activities and finely target support during the lesson. In many good lessons, this prevents learning from being outstanding.
- There is a positive climate for learning in all lessons. The very systematic way in which basic skills are taught provides pupils with a feeling of success, as they can see the progress they are

making. Teachers maintain good discipline and set high expectations for what pupils will achieve in the time available. Teaching assistants are well trained and teachers deploy them well, often to very successfully support pupils with additional needs, such as those pupils with special educational needs or receiving the pupil premium.

- The school has worked effectively to improve the feedback provided for pupils. They are given well thought out targets for the improvement of their work and there is secure advice given through marking. This advice, however, sometimes lacks full impact because it is not sufficiently precise and because pupils are not always given opportunity or time to act on the areas for improvement that have been identified.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. There are very clear expectations for how they will behave and a strong consistency in the way adults insist that these expectations are met. It is noticeable that adults, irrespective of their role in the school, never ignore lapses in behaviour or leave them for others to deal with. Because of this, pupils feel very safe and secure in school. The school is now working towards a regime where pupils self-manage their behaviour, as it is this that will move behaviour from being good to being outstanding.
- There are already many examples of pupils taking responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils, for example, take a positive role in mediating small disputes in the playground. They are also very keen to show off their school, for instance when taking visitors on a conducted tour.
- Pupils report little or no bullying. They are well aware of the causes and effects of bullying. They know how to deal with any that should take place. Pupils are also aware of how to keep themselves safe when out of school. They, for example, demonstrate good understanding of how to be safe and responsible when using the internet and mobile phones.
- Rates of attendance, once low, have risen due to very rigorous procedures concerning the follow up of any absence and great clarity as to what is an acceptable reason for absence and what is not. Lateness is also acted upon with speed and rigour. Full attendance is also celebrated and rewarded. As a result, attendance last year was at the national average, and there are good indicators that it is continuing to rise.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has provided outstanding leadership in moving the school forward since its last inspection. All leaders, including governors, articulate a high level of ambition for the improvement of the school, and a determination that it will become outstanding. There is very rigorous checking of the quality of teaching and robust action has been taken to ensure improvements. The management of staff performance has played a prominent part in developing both teaching and pupil support.
- School self-evaluation, including the very effective use of pupil progress information, is robust and accurate. This has been properly used to plan developments and to check on their impact. It showed, for example, that there was a need to improve the early teaching of reading and writing. A commercial scheme was introduced last year and is having the desired impact on overall standards. As a result of effective leadership and management, a review is, however, now planned because observations have shown that the way the scheme is being used is not maximising learning for a small minority.
- The school has a good curriculum that underpins the systematic building of basic skills. However, opportunities to make productive links between subjects to consolidate these skills in a wider context are not consistently planned and sometimes missed. This hinders pupils' progress. While the indoor programme of work for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is wide and varied, the very small area that is currently dedicated to day-to-day outdoor learning

restricts the potential to raise rates of progress still further for these children.

- There is good promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The school's provision for the promotion of cultural development is of particular note. The school ensures a breadth of knowledge of the cultures of others that underpins pupils' strong multicultural understanding. Leaders work hard to ensure all pupils are treated equally and that there is no discrimination.
 - The school's own survey and the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) show that parents and carers are very positive about the school.
 - The local authority supports the school and the governing body appropriately.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Although new in their roles, governors are already well organised and knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are aware of how the pupils' achievement compares with similar schools and are playing an increasing part in evaluating provision. As a result, they are now able to systematically hold the school to account and have a good understanding of teachers' performance and how performance management should be used to reward effective teaching. Governors have been proactive in supporting the use of pupil premium money to widen the role of the inclusion leader and encompass this group of pupils. They are checking the impact of this spending on pupils' progress and attitudes to learning. They ensure pupils are properly safeguarded.
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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	113288
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	401356

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	3–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Naomi Ibbs
Headteacher	Mitchell Frame
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 February 2010
Telephone number	01752 567668
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