

# Sturton by Stow Primary School

School Lane, Sturton-by-Stow, Lincoln, LN1 2BY

**Inspection dates** 5–6 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 because they are taught well in all age groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do well because their needs are understood and they are well supported.
- Provision in the Reception class is now good and, from starting points that are typical for their age, children make good progress.
- Teachers make it clear that they expect more from pupils' work and behaviour. They plan lessons well. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils receive good advice on how to improve their work. Marking is thorough and pupils respond to the comments teachers make.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils feel very safe and show exceptional attitudes to learning.
- The school is led and managed well. The new headteacher has successfully improved the quality of teaching, and this has contributed to results improving steadily over the past three years.
- Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide good support but also ask demanding questions to make sure it keeps on improving.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils are helped to reach the higher National Curriculum levels in tests, particularly in mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes. She saw 11 lessons or parts of lessons, and additional support sessions for pupils. Seven of the lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also observed two whole-school assemblies.
- Meetings were held with various senior and middle leaders and two members of the governing body. The inspector also spoke on the telephone with the Education adviser and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Pupils' views were sought throughout the inspection, during lessons and break times, and the inspector met with two groups of pupils, including members of the school council.
- Staff views were noted during the inspection and staff questionnaires were also analysed.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own data on pupils' progress, policies, planning and monitoring information.
- The inspector paid close attention to school information on attendance, behaviour and all aspects of safeguarding.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through the 17 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, three letters from parents, and discussions in the playground at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Sturton by Stow is smaller than the average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion who speak English as an additional language, and those from minority ethnic groups, is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion supported at school action is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2012.

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

- Make teaching and achievement outstanding in English and mathematics by:
  - making sure that the work set in lessons is always demanding, especially for the most-able pupils, so that more pupils gain the higher levels and the highest possible numbers make rapid progress levels reading, writing and mathematics
  - providing even more opportunities for pupils to be involved in marking and assessing their own work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills in English and mathematics are generally in line with national expectations for their age. They make good progress through the school, and by the end of Year 6, attainment is above average.
- Parents and carers, and pupils themselves, say that progress is good. There are no significant variations in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals also achieve well. Extra funding through the pupil premium is used well to provide a learning mentor who, through a regular lunchtime club, ensures that their learning needs are well met. An increasing number are now performing better than similar pupils nationally.
- Standards of reading are above average. The more-able pupils in Years 2 and 6 read fluently and with good expression, demonstrating skills above those expected for their age. Less-able pupils in these years show a secure grasp of the principles of reading and how they have been taught to cope with unfamiliar words. Pupils talk happily about what they enjoy reading and how often they read in school and at home.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good-quality support and achieve well as a result. A few make outstanding progress. Additional funding to provide adult support for smaller groups has been effective in promoting pupils' success in learning.
- Pupils make at least good progress in most lessons. In some of the lessons observed, progress was outstanding. Pupils are keen learners and rise to the challenges set for them by their teachers. In a typical science lesson, pupils were encouraged to investigate the range of creatures living in different rivers and draw their own conclusions about how they might be classified into groups.
- Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is generally good and increasing numbers are reaching high levels. However, more pupils are capable of doing this, especially in mathematics. The school recognises this, and has produced an information booklet on mathematics calculations and run a parents' workshop to help pupils to continue to improve.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Lesson observations and the work seen in pupils' books show that good teaching enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. They also show that teaching has improved over time, and is now outstanding in an increasing number of lessons.
- Teachers plan their lessons carefully, building on the knowledge which pupils already have. This ensures that tasks are demanding, engage the interest of both boys and girls, and motivate them well.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children benefit greatly from well-organised activities. Skilful staff create opportunities for children to extend their thinking and make consistently good progress. Even the youngest children make confident choices and are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are identified early. Their progress is tracked carefully. They receive high-quality support from teachers and skilled teaching assistants, either within lessons or in one-to-one or small group activities around the school.

- Activities in lessons are lively and varied. Teachers use computer technology, good quality, colourful resources, individual whiteboards, group and pair activities, and many 'hands-on' tasks so that pupils do not have to sit and listen passively for long periods of time. Their resulting motivation and enjoyment of learning contribute to their good progress.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers are very effective in creating opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking, apply ideas and work independently. All pupils are challenged and rise to meet the high expectations of the adults steering their learning. Just occasionally, teaching is not demanding enough to make sure that pupils aim as high as possible in their work, especially the most-able pupils.
- Teachers follow a common policy for marking, which pupils understand. Good-quality feedback makes sure that pupils know how to improve their work. Pupils are very keen to be more involved and to mark and correct work themselves.

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

- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They manage their own and each other's behaviour very well and play an active part in maintaining the positive atmosphere in the school. School councillors act as strong role models and are highly effective as ambassadors for change, who have been involved in plans to develop a separate outdoor area and adventure trail specifically for the older pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes enable teachers to teach effectively and pupils to learn rapidly. Clear routines and high expectations are communicated from the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children are very responsive because staff treat them with warmth and encouragement.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are based on mutual respect and regard. Pupils are proud to be a part of the school. They show great sensitivity for the needs of others and willingly share, offer their help and support each other. This was evident in the lunchtime 'chill out club' and after-school cooking activities.
- Pupils and their parents and carers are confident that school is a safe place to be. Pupils show a good awareness of different types of bullying, including internet-based bullying. They have confidence that the school will respond well to any such instances if they should arise.
- The school's behaviour policy is well understood by pupils and is applied consistently by all staff, ensuring good behaviour management. Parents and carers express satisfaction with the way that staff manage any unacceptable behaviour from individual pupils and ensure that it does not disrupt the education of others.
- Attendance rates have risen, and are above average. Pupils and parents understand the importance of good attendance and pupils share a common desire to want to be in school and to achieve well.
- The school gives good support to pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. This has enabled them to maintain good standards of attendance, behaviour and work, and make good progress in line with that of their peers. This has been helped by the input of key support staff.
- Pupils from different cultures and backgrounds get along noticeably well together. Pupils give thoughtful responses when given the opportunity to reflect on spiritual or moral issues during assemblies and in lessons. They show respect for, and interest in, the views of others.

## The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher has been successful in establishing and communicating a clear vision of improvement for the school. The leadership team work successfully together, and their high expectations are reflected throughout the school.
- The school keeps all aspects of its work under constant review. School improvement plans are realistic and sharply focused. They illustrate well the school's ambition to seek ongoing improvement, such as the continued monitoring and active changes to the individual support provided for the school's most vulnerable pupils.
- Leaders and the governing body make sure that the way they check on teachers' performance links directly to whole-school priorities, the impact on pupils' progress and, in turn, staff salaries. This has raised the quality of teaching in the school. Parents and pupils have commented on this improvement since the last inspection.
- Good staff training and the opportunity to work in collaboration with a group of five, other schools have led to improvements in teachers' planning and use of data and the way in which teachers mark and assess pupils' work. This means that they are more skilful in tailoring work to suit the needs of individuals and groups.
- Pupils are taught a broad and interesting range of subjects. 'Wow' days provide exciting events and activities to launch each new learning theme across the school. They provide inspiring and memorable experiences, and pupils enjoy the different themes and topics they study.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously pursued. No pupil, regardless of background or need, is denied access to anything the school has to offer. Leaders ensure that there is no discrimination against any pupil.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It has strong links with the local community, boosted by a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits. Pupils work alongside members of the parents' association through a range of different events and this has contributed to the 'family' feel of the school.
- The local authority has supported the school very well. It has contributed to improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and its assessments of the quality of teaching and learning have helped to raise standards in the school.
- Safeguarding meets current government requirements. The school carries out the necessary checks on staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. All staff have undergone training at the required levels.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors work in close partnership with the school and the local authority. They show a clear determination to improve standards, while retaining a strong belief in each pupil as a unique individual. They ensure that financial resources continue to be efficiently managed, for example in the way that pupil premium money is spent on providing additional teaching support for pupils who are behind in their literacy and numeracy, and the appointment of the learning mentor and creation of the lunchtime 'chill out club' for the more vulnerable pupils. Governors see that staff performance management is checked carefully, so that improved teaching remains the key to improving achievement. Governors have provided insightful support in making the right teaching appointments, and have not been afraid to wait for the right candidates to be found. Governors make sure that their monitoring includes regular visits to check directly on key areas of the school's work such as achievement, the quality of

teaching, or leadership and management. This helps them to gain a good working knowledge of the school's strengths and what still needs to improve, and is supported by training to help them to improving their own knowledge and capabilities.

## 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>	120478
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	405931

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rachel Dunbar
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Barker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01427 788210
<b>Fax number</b>	01427 787159
<b>Email address</b>	admin@sturton-by-stow.lincs.sch.uk

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