

Standhill Infant School

Standhill Road, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 1JL

Inspection dates

7–8 February 2013

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.

- Effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage makes sure that teaching is good and children make good progress. In linking letters and sounds (phonics) and developing early writing skills, many children make outstanding progress.
- An upward trend in attainment, started in 2011, is continuing. More pupils than nationally attain expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion attaining above-average standards is in line with other schools.
- Teaching is more consistently good as new staff have worked hard to remove previous weaknesses. This means that all pupils make good progress.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and usually exemplary around the school. Pupils feel safe because of the excellent family atmosphere. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development promotes positive attitudes and a good knowledge of different cultures.
- The headteacher has succeeded in motivating staff to work as a team to improve all aspects of the school's work. Staff make regular checks on teaching and pupils' achievement and identify where improvements can be made.
- Governors use their considerable expertise to assist senior staff in the drive for improvement. Their visits mean they know how well the school is doing and contribute to its capacity to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There remain a few inconsistencies in teaching that affect the progress of some pupils.
- Teachers do not always set work at the right level for pupils throughout each lesson.
- Occasionally some teachers talk for too long at the beginning and ends of sessions, which limits the time pupils have to do their work.
- The quantity and quality of pupils' writing varies across classes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all of the teachers in nine lessons. Two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of six pupils, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, and staff with leadership and management responsibilities.
- A discussion took place with a representative of the local authority to assess the support and advice provided for the school.
- There were 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. The inspector took account of these and also sought the views of parents and carers as they arrived at school with their children.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress, planning for school improvement and records of checks on teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were scrutinised.
- Scaffolding being used to fit rows of solar panels to two roof areas limited outdoor activities.

Inspection team

Joseph Peacock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- The school teaches children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes (known as 'Foundation 2').
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care, or with a parent in the armed services, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average, but the proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is well-below average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils off site.
- The school has had many staff changes over the past two years with a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. Three of the five classes also have new teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Iron out the few remaining inconsistencies in pupils' progress by making sure that teachers:
 - always set tasks at the right level for pupils in all parts of lessons
 - do not talk for too long at the beginning and ends of sessions so that pupils have enough time to do their work
 - have the same high expectations of the amount of writing pupils should produce in their literacy lessons and other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils make outstanding progress in learning letters and their sounds because of the excellent teaching of phonics in Foundation 2 and in some other classes. As a result, pupils are beginning to make rapid progress in all classes in reading and writing, accounting for the rise in standards.
- Pupils have secure strategies for reading and spelling unfamiliar words, such as sounding-out letters or breaking-up longer words. In some classes, pupils do not do enough writing and this slows progress. Parents are very supportive of their children's learning and their efforts to hear their children reading at home are contributing to the rise in standards.
- Better teaching has resulted in a steady upward trend in standards since 2011. Most pupils are making good progress and attainment is currently above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school promotes mathematical skills well. Pupils enjoy using computers and completing interesting and demanding tasks so that they find learning rewarding. All pupils enjoy solving mathematical problems such as counting grains of rice or pasta with plastic tweezers in the Early Years Foundation Stage and rapidly paced games such as 'ping pong' number calculations in Year 1.
- Children join the school with skills and understanding below those typical for their age. Some children are very young on entry. Early reading and writing skills are especially low for some. Effective leadership and management of the Foundation 2 classes make sure that children make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1, most reach average standards in all areas. For many, their progress in reading and writing is excellent, taking into account their starting points.
- Children work well together on the good range of activities indoors. Learning is effective and children make good progress when they work in a group with the teacher to develop key skills such as counting and recording the number of people boarding or leaving a bus.
- Outdoor activities were limited at the time of the inspection by scaffolding but children were able to use the large playground to enjoy writing road signs and setting up traffic lights before riding tricycles. The links made between indoor and outdoor learning are helping to extend children's understanding.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. The expertise of teachers and teaching assistants who work closely with individuals or small groups of pupils make sure that many achieve well.
- Individual help for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium means most of them make good progress. There is no significant gap between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others. This means that these pupils do well compared with similar pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers aim high for pupils. Most match work closely to the full range of ability levels. There is a good pace to learning in lessons and, because work is interesting, pupils concentrate and work hard. Pupils achieve well and are well-prepared to move on to junior school.
- In the Foundation 2 classes, teachers plan demanding activities such as retelling stories or counting forwards and backwards to promote literacy and numeracy skills successfully. The teaching of phonics is excellent, enabling all to learn letters and their sounds quickly. Staff are very caring and attentive, ensuring all children have the support that they need to do well.
- Teachers frequently check and accurately judge pupils' rates of progress. This is much improved since the previous inspection. Most use this information well to plan relevant tasks for pupils of different abilities. On occasions, teachers talk for too long to the whole class and some pupils lose concentration as the introduction is too hard or too easy for them. Lengthy introductions and ends of sessions that are not relevant for different groups of pupils mean that in some sessions some pupils do not make enough progress.
- Marking is thorough and gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work. This has also improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills are usually developed well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Skilled and conscientious teaching assistants make sure individuals or small groups of pupils are well supported both in the classroom and outside it.
- Pupils often use computers to complete their work, which helps develop information and communication technology skills. Based on the story of 'The Jungle Book', Year 2 pupils used laptops confidently to write their story about a journey, remembering to use punctuation correctly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils are keen to do well and this has a positive impact on the quality of learning. Inattention occasionally happens when teachers do not pitch learning at the right level during over-long introductions or when finishing sessions.
 - All pupils say that they feel safe and enjoy school. 'Teachers are very, very, very nice' is a widely held view among pupils and their parents and carers. This is reflected in pupils' above-average attendance. Pupils are thoughtful and polite and behaviour around school and in assemblies is exemplary.
 - Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection agree that their children are happy. Virtually all who responded to Parent View would recommend the school to others. 'Teachers are inspirational. She wants to become a teacher', and 'He says he needs to come so that he misses nothing', are typically supportive comments.
 - Pupils are rarely concerned about bullying. The only examples they could recall were others telling tales about them and sometimes being pushed over. All pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as the use of mobile telephones to send upsetting messages.
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- All pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the school rules and try their best to 'Be good' and 'Be a team'. The bee symbol is used effectively to encourage pupils to 'Be caring, be polite, be honest and be sensible'.
- Behaviour is consistently well managed and any cases of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with immediately and effectively by staff. A recent survey conducted for the governing body showed how thoroughly staff record and deal with any incidents.
- Staff lead by example and this makes a major contribution to the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Visitors, visits to places of worship and topics, such as 'Africa', give pupils a good understanding of other cultures and other faiths.

The leadership and management are good

- The dynamic leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher build a strong staff team. The headteacher's expertise in collecting and analysing performance information promptly identifies any possible underachievement.
- Senior staff and subject leaders are fully involved in the process of checking pupils' progress on a regular basis. Any pupils who are falling behind in any subject are identified each half term and supported. Staff are working as one to enable even more pupils to attain above-average standards.
- Teaching is checked in detail through half-termly lesson observations, helping to make sure that it is effective in promoting learning. Most of the weaknesses highlighted in the previous inspection report have been tackled. Just occasionally inconsistencies persist, as in the amount of writing pupils are expected to complete in their books.
- The leadership and management of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are good. Parents and carers are routinely involved in regular reviews. Most are pleased with the learning support provided for their children by staff and specialists from a wide range of other agencies, such as educational psychologists.
- Leaders and the governing body make sure that progression through the pay scale is closely linked to teachers' performance. The 'Teachers' Standards' are used effectively to judge the quality of teaching.
- The local authority believes this is a continuously improving school because of the strength of its leadership and management. Effective support was provided for the new headteacher and during the many staff changes but this is no longer needed. Periodically, the local authority checks the school's performance to see that it is continuing to improve.
- The school fosters good relations with parents and carers. Those who responded to Parent View were very positive about their children's experience of school. All agreed that staff treat every pupil equally and that there is a warm, family atmosphere. Pupils are happy and enjoy school and this pleases their parents and carers. Discrimination is not tolerated in any form. Virtually all said that they would recommend the school to others.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school has a dedicated governing body with a widespread range of expertise to offer. Governors sit in on lessons and invariably become involved, helping pupils and supporting the

teacher. Through their frequent visits, they know how well staff are working and the school's performance compared to that of similar schools nationally. All are keen to see the school continue to improve and insist on being kept fully informed by staff and the headteacher. They are beginning to link their monitoring visits much more closely to the school's identified priorities, giving staff another view on the level of improvement. Each year the performance of the headteacher and all teachers is checked using information about pupils' progress and the standards achieved. Governors are appropriately trained, with most having recently attended training sessions. Financial resources, including pupil premium funding, are well managed and their impact checked. The governing body has a good knowledge of child protection and safeguarding matters and all current national requirements relating to safeguarding are met.

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	122530
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	406097

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	131
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patrick Astill
Headteacher	Sharon O'Connor
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2011
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