

South Stanley Infant and Nursery School

Tyne Road, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 6PZ

Inspection dates

13–14 March 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.

- From the time when pupils start school to when they leave, many pupils make progress, which is better than might normally be expected.
- Pupils' social and emotional development are very good, as the school focuses extremely well on these aspects in class.
- Teaching is good because teachers carefully assess how well pupils are learning during lessons.
- Teaching assistants play an important part in helping pupils to improve and make good progress.
- Behaviour is good and the pupils are keen to learn in lessons.
- The vast majority of parents support the school and regularly attend social occasions and assemblies, which celebrate the achievements of the pupils.
- The headteacher has shown determination in making improvements to teaching and learning, which has helped pupils to make better progress.
- The governors of the school have been very effective in helping the school with support, as well as making sure that they question the school leaders and hold them to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching, over time, is outstanding.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities at Key Stage 1 to write fuller sentences in their English and in topic work.
- Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not planned well enough when children are playing and working by themselves.
- The school needs more contact with a very small number of parents, so that their children attend well and make better progress at school.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half-a-days' notice.
- Inspectors visited 13 lessons, or parts of lessons, taught by seven different teachers. One was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they do as well as looking at their work in class.
- Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Documents were examined, including those relating to safeguarding, the school's improvement plan and records which show the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, as well as the school's own assessment data.
- The views of 15 parents who were spoken to as they escorted their children into school were also taken into account, as well the school's own Pupil Questionnaire, which surveyed 34 pupils.
- Sixteen staff also completed questionnaires about their views of the school.

Inspection team

Frank Cain, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Angela James

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- South Stanley Infant and Nursery is a smaller than average-sized school.
- The proportion of girls is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average, but the proportion at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of teaching that is good or better by:
 - improving the planning and the organization in Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure children make greater progress when working on their own
 - giving pupils more tasks in their topic work and English to write at length.
- Strengthen links with parents whose children are often absent so that their children's attendance improves and so help them to make better progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start the school they have skills, which are about a year behind those typically expected for their age. By the time they leave at the end of Year 2, they are close to the national average. This represents good progress.
- Progress is good in English in Key Stage 1 but often it is even better in mathematics.
- Girls' attainment is slightly higher than that for boys in English, but the reverse is true for mathematics, but in both cases the differences are not significant.
- Good teaching with challenging work has helped the pupils to make better progress. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage children were made to think when counting out five plastic shapes, but then 'taking away' some, so introducing them to the idea of subtraction.
- In a lesson on multiplication in Year 2 the pupils were learning a new way to work this out accurately. The good teaching allowed most to grasp the new technique quickly and they then used it effectively in other calculations.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in line with other pupils because of the effective support they receive from teaching assistants.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress in the school because of the extra resources it has helped provide. Some pupils eligible for free school meals have made more progress in mathematics than other pupils and their attainment in reading has improved more quickly. Consequently, they are catching up other pupils in both their English and mathematics achievement.
- In the recent tests to check how well pupils are learning the sounds that letters make, the school did better than the national average; this reflects that pupils in Key Stage 1 read well. Older pupils can talk about their favourite authors, but almost all pupils enjoy reading for pleasure.
- Parents think their children are making good progress and pupils supported this view.
- The school is passionate about improving not just academic achievement, but also social and personal development of the pupils and does so successfully.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectation of pupils and they help create good attitudes towards learning in classrooms. Well planned activities are well matched to pupils' needs, neither too hard for some nor too easy for more-able pupils. They capture the interest of pupils and promote good progress. Pupils say that teachers make learning fun.
- Pupils learn well in groups or with a partner. In a lesson on the important skills of speaking and listening, one pupil had to describe something while another had to listen and carefully ask questions, such as 'why' or 'when' so that the speaker had to adapt his explanation. They all responded positively and well to the tasks given.
- In the teacher-led sessions in the Early Years Foundation Stage pupils make good progress. In the times when children work and play on their own, however, there is not enough guidance for them do as well.
- A new reading scheme is having a positive effect on pupils' reading but also on their writing skills across the school, but they do not get enough extended writing opportunities in some areas.
- Teachers regularly assess pupils in class, either by good questioning, or by checking their responses when using mini-whiteboards.
- Marking of pupils' work is frequent and effective in helping pupils to make good progress towards targets that are glued in the front of their books.
- Pupils make extremely good progress in their social skills and in handling difficult issues such as concerning discrimination. In a lesson, which involved the introduction of a 'character doll'

whose leg was broken, pupils were encouraged to think of questions to ask him and to imagine how he might feel as a disabled person.

- In a singing lesson to begin the school day, the pupils enthusiastically sang together. The words linked to school's expectations for behaviour and positive attitudes to their work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, because the work is well matched to their needs. Teaching assistants are used well, both in class, and when taking small groups of pupils. They work effectively with pupils in their writing tasks and in mathematics.
- Teaching reinforces awareness of other people and in the Early Years Foundation Stage their learning is linked to China, including the food its people eat.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour during lessons is good and minor disturbances are infrequent. When incidents do occur they are dealt with extremely well by patient, skilful teachers. Rarely does poor behaviour disrupt the learning of the majority of the pupils.
- The reward systems encourage pupils to behave well as they lead to positive benefits, such as being able to attend school trips. The pupils say 'it's good to be green', which is based on a traffic light system with red indicating unacceptable behaviour.
- Good manners are taught from children's entry, so that they care for others and take responsibility for their actions. In one lesson a child gently patted the back of another who had a mild coughing attack. Another child, without being prompted, mopped up some milk that he had spilt.
- Parents, before school, were very positive that behaviour in the school was good and that there was no bullying. Pupils are confident that they are safe from bullying and that if there are any incidents of trouble they know they will be dealt with very quickly. Older pupils are aware of different forms of bullying, in particular they understand what to do if they get a horrible text message.
- School records show that examples of poor behaviour are uncommon and decreasing.
- Pupils, whose circumstances might put them at risk, are cared for exceptionally well. Staff have been trained to deal with difficult situations and the school calls on the full range of outside agencies in order to help these pupils when necessary.
- The majority of pupils attend well and arrive on time. Attendance has been low compared to national figures, but it has shown a big improvement in Year 2, because the school promotes the importance of good attendance at every opportunity. A small number of families still need to be convinced about the importance of good attendance. The school finds that they are often difficult to contact. These pupils make slower progress because of their frequent absences.
- One pupil who was ill was picked up at school by a parent, who had tried to get her child to stay at home that morning, but the child was determined to attend school. School is popular amongst pupils and the attitude to learning for the vast majority is good.
- The site is secure and the good procedures for making sure that visitors are checked and have badges make the pupils feel safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led and all staff, including the governing body, are ambitious for the pupils.
- Because the leadership of teaching is good, Teaching has improved significantly from satisfactory to good since the previous inspection. The school has used teachers' professional development to improve their skills, for example, in assessing how well pupils are learning and to make the curriculum more interesting.
- The curriculum now offers exciting opportunities to learn about other cultures. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught how to count to five in Mandarin, and learning Spanish is

also popular.

- The pupils' social and moral development is a strength of the school and the school tackles discrimination exceptionally well.
- Parents who were spoken were very complimentary towards the school and the majority are very pleased with their children's progress and with home-school communication.
- The local authority has provided some good support for the school to check on its progress and with lesson observations to see if the school is judging accurately how well it is doing.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly committed to the school and are well aware where its strengths lie in teaching as well as in pupils' achievement, because they study information provided by the school. They challenge the school as well as offering support for the school, for example, on the recently introduced scheme to help children learn to read. They were an important factor in introducing the Comenius project into school, which allows the school to make links with other countries. They understand the importance of linking staff salaries to good teaching and pay particular attention to looking at how well teachers are achieving improvements in pupils' progress. They are aware of the pupil premium funding and how it is helping children to improve their performance. Members of the governing body mentor new members so that they understand their responsibilities.

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	114030
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	405495

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Telfer
Headteacher	Heather Kemp
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2011
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