

# South Stoke Primary School

The Street, South Stoke, Reading, RG8 0JS

**Inspection dates** 12–13 June 2013

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good        | 2        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| 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.

- The headteacher and the governing body set high expectations and robustly monitor the work of the school, especially the achievement of individual pupils.
- Consequently, teachers have high expectations and the quality of teaching is good.
- Teachers know pupils individually and plan lessons well to meet the abilities of different age pupils who are taught in the same classes.
- As a result, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who are at the school for a reasonable length of time and remain until the end of Year 6 leave with attainment that is broadly in line and sometimes above the national average.
- Relationships are good. Pupils say they feel safe because bullying is extremely rare in school.
- As a result, pupils enjoy school and behave well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are a few occasions when teachers spend too much time talking to pupils at the beginning of lessons and miss some opportunities to use teaching assistants fully to support pupils' learning.
- In a few lessons, more able pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are given work that does not always fully stretch their abilities.
- Progress in mathematics is not as rapid as that in reading and writing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons and parts of lessons, taught by two teachers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and a group of pupils.
- The inspector heard a number of pupils read and examined pupils' work, together with the headteacher.
- The inspector analysed responses from 26 parents and carers who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website, and talked to a group of parents and carers.

## Inspection team

James Henry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- South Stoke is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all the pupils are White British.
- The percentage of pupils who move in and out of the school at times other than those usually expected is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average, although the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides extra funding for children in local authority care, for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or for pupils whose parents are in the armed forces, is well below the national average.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the same class as Years 1 and 2 pupils. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are taught together in the other mixed age class.
- Only five pupils took the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012, of which two joined the school at the beginning of the summer term in Year 6. As a result, it is not possible to judge whether the school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding by:
  - ensuring that teachers do not spend too long talking to pupils at the beginning of lessons, so that pupils quickly become involved in their learning
  - ensuring that teachers fully use teaching assistants to support pupils' learning at the beginning of lessons
  - ensuring that more able pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are always given work that fully challenges them.
- Increase pupils' progress in mathematics to match their rapid progress in reading and writing by:
  - ensuring that pupils have consistent opportunities to put into practice the advice given by teachers through marking, especially when developing their skills in solving problems and carrying out investigations
  - ensuring that pupils have consistent opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Due to the very small numbers in each year group, it is not possible to usefully compare data about pupils' achievement with national averages. However, school assessments, pupils' work and observations in lessons show that individual pupils make good progress overall across the school.
- All the parents who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website or who spoke to the inspector felt that their child makes good progress at school.
- Pupils who join different year groups at various times during the year make good progress while in the school because of good teaching. Over time, individual pupils who spend a reasonable length of time at the school and remain until the end of Year 6 leave with attainment that is broadly in line with or above the national average in English and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 fluctuates due to the small numbers of pupils. However, over time, attainment in English has been higher than in mathematics, because progress in reading and writing is more rapid than in mathematics.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in reading because the school has a strong focus on developing pupils' early reading skills. For example, when Key Stage 1 pupils were heard reading, they had the confidence and ability to break down different sounds and read unfamiliar words.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a wide variety of skills, ranging from below that expected to that which is typical for their age. Given their different starting points, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared to begin the National Curriculum in Year 1.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because staff know individual pupils well and provide good support to meet their different abilities.
- While the number of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is very small, school assessments and pupils' work show these pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, with the school effectively closing the gap for individual pupils, especially in reading and writing.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers track pupils' progress very carefully and plan lessons well to meet the requirements of different age groups and abilities in the mixed age classes, including for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. However, there are a few occasions when some more able pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are not always full stretched in their work.
- Effective question and answer sessions are used by teachers to gauge pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. For example, pupils produced good extended pieces of writing following questions and discussions about being an evacuee in the Second World War.
- However, there are a few occasions when teachers spend too long talking to pupils at the beginning of lessons, and opportunities are missed to make full use of teaching assistants and involve pupils quickly in their own learning.
- Pupils make good progress partly because teachers use their good subject knowledge to teach pupils from different key stages effectively. This is especially true for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants, particularly as they complete their individual tasks, and this allows these pupils to be fully involved in lessons. The school ensures that pupils are not discriminated against and that all have an equal opportunity to learn well.
- Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly with positive comments to help them improve their work. However, marking is more effective in pupils' writing than in mathematics. This is because

teachers do not consistently give pupils chance to put into practice the guidance given in their mathematics work, especially in developing their skills in solving problems and carrying out investigations.

- All the parents who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website or spoke to the inspector felt that their child was taught well. Pupils also felt they were taught well and that teachers made lessons enjoyable, especially when different subjects were taught together through specific themes or topics.
- Relationships are good and with teachers develop pupils' personal qualities well. Teachers successfully encourage pupils in mixed age classes to learn from one another. Consequently, pupils cooperate well together and show good levels of concentration in completing their work.

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

- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. Pupils understand and appreciate the school's system for rewarding good behaviour and the sanctions in place to deal with any inappropriate behaviour.
- Consequently, behaviour is typically good, with pupils being polite and courteous to each other and to adults in the school.
- Inappropriate behaviour does not interrupt learning in lessons, although minor reminders are needed for some pupils if teachers spend too long talking at the beginning of lessons. This is why behaviour is not outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, because bullying is extremely rare and they have every confidence in staff to deal with any concerns or problems. There is a high level of pastoral care in the school, with each pupil known individually to staff. As one parent explained, 'There is a family atmosphere in the school.'
- The school helps pupils to keep themselves safe. For example, an officer from the local fire brigade talks to pupils about the dangers of fire, while a community police officer talks to them about road safety and 'stranger danger'. Pupils were also able to explain at length the school's procedures in case of any emergency.
- All the parents who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website or who spoke to the inspector felt that their child was happy and safe at school, that the school deals with any instances of bullying effectively and that it makes sure pupils behave well.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average, with almost all pupils being on time for school.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher, ably supported and challenged by the governing body, sets high expectations and maintains the good quality of teaching effectively through consistent monitoring of learning in lessons.
- However, leadership and management are not outstanding because leaders' monitoring of lessons has not ensured that teaching is consistently outstanding.
- Almost all the parents who responded to the Parent Survey on the Ofsted website felt that the school was well led and they were unanimous in recommending the school to another parent.
- The headteacher manages the performance of staff well, holding them to account for the progress of individual pupils. This is done through an effective system for tracking pupils' progress and highlighting pupils who may need extra help, especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- In order to widen the experience of staff, well-targeted professional training is provided for them through the school working closely with other local primary schools.
- By carrying out accurate assessments of the school's performance, the headteacher, staff and the governing body know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. As a result, action plans to improve the school are agreed and implemented successfully.

- In order to ensure the curriculum is well balanced and meets the abilities of different aged pupils in the same class, subjects are linked together and taught through specific themes. For example, the Key Stage 2 class covered a range of different subjects in their study of the Second World War.
- While pupils are given consistent opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills in different subjects, opportunities are missed for them to use their mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- The school works hard to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, assemblies are held in the local church, pupils visit different places of worship such as mosques and synagogues, and the school has strong links with a school in France, with pupils from both schools visiting one another. The school council has been involved in planning and developing the village playground and pupils perform carol services at Christmas in the local village hall. This also helps to foster good relationships within the local and wider community.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and robust. All adults are checked to ensure they are suitable to work in school and staff receive appropriate child protection training.
- The local authority regularly checks the school's own assessments of its performance and provides appropriate support when requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body provides a good strategic direction for the school. Governors visit the school regularly and this enables them to gain an independent view about the quality of teaching. For example, governors have recently reviewed pupils' books and observed the work of teaching assistants in class. There are clear performance management procedures for staff, including the headteacher. The governing body has effective procedures to ensure that any teacher salary increase is clearly linked to staff improving the achievement of pupils. Professional training is regularly undertaken by individual governors, for example on safer recruitment, monitoring the impact of pupil premium finances and the use of data in schools. Consequently, members of the governing body have a good understanding of the data measuring the achievement of pupils, especially how to analyse and interpret data that could be unreliable because it is based on very small numbers of pupils. The budget of the school is well managed and the spending of pupil premium money is clearly defined, for example on employing additional time for a teaching assistant to support pupils in receipt of the funding. The governing body effectively monitors the difference this is making, to ensure that these pupils make good progress in school.

## 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> | 123093      |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Oxfordshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 411954      |

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

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| <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> | 38   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Andrew Goss  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Amanda Rogers  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 3 March 2010   |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01491 872948   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01491 972948   |
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