

Studfall Junior School

Rowlett Road, Corby, NN17 2BT

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 in English and mathematics to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils in the specialist resource provision make outstanding progress from their lower starting points and do much better than similar pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve extremely well.
- Teaching is good and sometimes it is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations for learning. Teaching assistants provide excellent support. Lessons are well planned so that there is a close match of tasks to pupils' different abilities.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety is outstanding. Most pupils attend school regularly and they have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Both headteachers provide inspirational leadership which has created a strong commitment and drive amongst staff for continuous improvement.
- As a result, there has been good progress since the last inspection. The proportion of teaching which is outstanding is increasing and attainment is steadily rising. Governors provide good support for leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils are doing better than expected or reaching the higher levels of attainment in national tests.
- Teaching does not always challenge the thinking of more-able pupils
- Pupils are not always informed how to improve their work when their books are marked.
- Practical resources are not consistently used to develop pupils' understanding of new mathematical ideas.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 25 lessons of which 13 were observed jointly with both headteachers. All teachers were seen teaching.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and examined their reading records. Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' books with subject leaders and discussed two case studies of pupils from the specialist resource provision with the special educational needs co-ordinator.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, including a group of hearing-impaired pupils, four members of the governing body, staff with leadership responsibilities, a representative of the local authority and a group of parents. Inspectors also met parents when they brought their children to school and held informal discussions with pupils at lunch time and playtime.
- Inspectors took account of 39 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also looked at questionnaires returned from staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including records of attendance, behaviour and physical handling, safeguarding policies, outcomes of governors' visits, the school improvement plan and information about pupils' progress over time.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Bucktin

Additional Inspector

Margaret Jones

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and a few speak English as an additional language.
- An average proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is supported through school action. A high proportion of these pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school provides specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs in the form of designated provision for 30 pupils with hearing impairment, autistic spectrum disorder and physical disabilities.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals, those whose families are in the armed services and those looked after by local authority) is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school organises a breakfast club each morning for approximately 30 pupils.
- In September 2012, the school entered into a hard federation with Studfall Infant and Nursery school. The joint headteachers of the junior school now manage both schools, overseen by a single governing body. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests by making sure that teachers always:
 - extend pupils' thinking and set more challenging tasks for more-able pupils
 - inform pupils how to improve their work when marking their books
 - use practical resources in mathematics to develop pupils' understanding of new mathematical ideas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The 2012 published data show that the standards pupils reach by the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with the national average. Attainment has been rising steadily since the last inspection and the 2012 results are the best results for several years. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs did much better than similar pupils nationally.
- The 2012 published data does not provide the full picture on pupils' achievement. The school's robust and accurate assessment on entry to Year 3, verified by the local authority, shows that pupils join the school with below average standards.
- Evidence from pupils' work and lesson observations over time, indicate good consistent progress across year groups and subjects. A few more-able pupils are now also working at the highest levels in English and mathematics, although occasionally there are missed opportunities to extend the learning of these pupils further.
- In 2012, pupils eligible for the pupil premium were approximately a year behind their classmates in English and mathematics, although a significant number of these pupils were in the designated resource provision and made outstanding progress from very low starting points. The school's data show that the attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium in English and mathematics is similar to their classmates and the gap is narrowing. This is because these pupils receive good individual and small-group support from the additional funding.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in the designated resource provision make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because highly experienced teaching assistants who have been trained well break tasks down into smaller steps and making excellent use of signing, visual resources and questioning to stimulate pupils' learning further. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs throughout the school make equally outstanding progress.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and writing as a result of the good teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Pupils are also making equally good progress in mathematics because there is a greater emphasis on using and applying mathematics. Occasionally there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of new mathematical ideas by using practical resources.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' planning is thorough and ensures that learning tasks are closely matched to pupils' different levels of ability in lessons. In a Year 5 English lesson some pupils were writing similar sentences while others were writing more complex sentences. The very few pupils with hearing impairments were encouraged to write a simple sentence and explain the difference between this and a compound sentence.
- Teachers' high expectations for learning mean that pupils do their best and finish all tasks they are given. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils used indirect speech and transformed it into direct speech with increasing accuracy as the teacher skilfully used questioning to develop their understanding of the differences between direct and reported speech. As a result all pupils consistently used speech marks and commas when writing in direct speech.

- In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils from the specialist resource provision worked systematically through more complex addition and subtraction problems and applied these to solving money problems. However, pupils work shows that sometimes, teachers provide tasks which are too easy and miss the opportunity to extend learning further.
- Teaching assistants provide outstanding support for all pupils with additional learning needs in lessons. They use skilful questioning to clearly explain any technical language so that pupils develop an understanding of new ideas. They also structure the learning activity and use sign language or specialist resources where appropriate to enable pupils with autism or hearing impairments to fully engage in learning.
- The teaching of basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers make consistently good use of interactive whiteboards in lessons for teaching and learning. They ensure pupils apply their knowledge of phonics for writing and reading and provide good opportunities to write extensively in other subjects such as history. Numeracy is promoted well, in subjects such as science where pupils' record data from their investigations and through activities such as running the tuck shop at breaktimes.
- Pupils work is regularly marked, although occasionally teachers do not always inform pupils how to improve their learning.
- Although practical resources are generally used well to develop pupils' understanding of new ideas in different subject, this is not always the case in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' outstanding behaviour was seen in assemblies, in lessons, in the playground, at breakfast club and in other school activities. At play times all pupils show great care and consideration for others. Pupils consistently move from one area of the school in a safe and orderly manner and take the utmost care to use equipment and resources safely including the internet.
- Pupils are very polite, well-mannered and courteous to visitors. They always hold the door open for an adult and consistently respond to adults saying, 'Thank you' with, 'You're welcome!'
- Pupils have a very good understanding of bullying and how to prevent it. They confirm that bullying is very rare and dealt with most effectively and quickly by staff. The school's log of incidents of bullying or harassment shows that appropriate procedures are followed to significantly reduce these on the rare occasion when they occur. Pupils know that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Parents who responded to Parent View and those in discussion with inspectors were unanimous in confirming that behaviour and safety are outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is also outstanding. They greatly enjoy their learning and are most keen to do well. Although attendance is in line with most other schools there is a low rate of persistent absence as most absence is due to medical treatments illness or therapy. The above-average attendance of most pupils and excellent punctuality to lessons reflects their outstanding attitudes to learning.
- Pupils respond particularly well to the consistent and effective management of behaviour by staff. In many lessons pupils were rewarded for their effort and strived to do even better when

merits were given out alongside timely praise and encouragement.

- All pupils look after one another and consider the different needs of others, by for example, providing space for wheelchair users to pass by safely. Hearing-impaired pupils said that they feel very happy and included in all the school offers. In this way the school promotes equal opportunities for all pupils.
- Pupils with severe challenging behaviours associated with autism make outstanding progress in developing self-control and in their social interaction skills so that they re-engage quickly with learning.

The leadership and management are good

- Under the exemplary leadership of the joint headteachers, the school has steadily raised pupils' attainment in recent years and ensured the highest levels of achievement for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Leaders have been particularly successful in maintaining an ethos for learning which permeates the whole school. This is reflected in the shared commitment of staff who work very well as a team to drive pupils' achievement forward by continuing to improve their own practice.
- Self-evaluation is most accurate. The use of outcomes from the monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress are used effectively to set sharply focused priorities for improvement across the school. For example, leaders use this information in raising achievement further by increasing the proportion of pupils reaching the highest levels in the national tests.
- The headteachers have used the outcomes of their accurate observations of lesson observations and analysis of pupils' progress over time to improve the quality of teaching by eliminating any weaknesses and increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching.
- The management of teachers' performance is used well to improve the quality of teaching and clearly links pay increases to how well pupils achieve. Outstanding training has moved weaker teaching from less experienced teachers to at least good and sometimes outstanding over a relatively short period of time.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding well to provide additional teaching-assistant support, mentoring, and additional teaching and intervention groups to support learning. As a result, eligible pupils make good progress.
- There are wide-ranging extremely well-planned activities to enrich pupils' learning and promote their well-being, contributing greatly to their enjoyment of school and their outstanding behaviour. These include an excellent range of sports and after-school clubs, such as boccia, and construction clubs for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, the choir and breakfast club. Themed whole-school activities such as 'well-being week' effectively enable pupils to build their confidence and self-esteem.
- There are good opportunities to promote basic skills across different subjects and activities. The specialist resource provision makes sure all pupils are fully included in all mainstream lessons and are not taught in a separate unit. This promotes an excellent understanding and appreciation of the needs of others.
- The strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was seen in an assembly which considered how different peoples feel about changes in their lives. The impact

of this was shown when pupils discussed how well prepared and comfortable they felt about transfer to secondary school.

- Pupils have excellent opportunities to learn together and develop team work and leadership skills, particularly through sport and the wide range of visits and visitors to school including the residential trips for Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils experience a sense of awe and wonder through, for example, singing in the choir, in art and in poetry.
- The local authority is supporting the work of the school effectively, particularly in providing an external independent and professional view of the impact of leadership and teaching on pupils' achievement over time.
- All parents attend annual reviews of their children's statements of special educational needs. There is a high rate of parental engagement in all the school offers, particularly through the Parent Ambassadors. All parents strongly support the school's work and highly praise the exceptional work of the two headteachers, for example, in bringing the infant and junior schools together under one federation.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide strong support for all leaders through their regular visits to the school and engagement in school activities. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and are rigorous in making sure that the performance of the headteachers is clearly linked to whole-school improvement priorities and that teachers' pay is linked to their performance. Governors make sure all legal requirements are met, especially for safeguarding, where they keep policies and training up to date and carry out rigorous checking of the suitability of staff and visitors to work with children. They use information about the progress pupils make well to hold the school to account and set priorities for improvement. They have an accurate view of how well pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding are doing in relation to others and are asking key questions to make sure the school provides value for money in accelerating their progress.

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	121809
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	411857

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	435
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rena Glitheroe
Headteacher	Louise McGeachie, Kim Kirchin (joint headteachers)
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2010
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