

Stilton CofE VC Primary School

Church Street, Stilton, Peterborough, PE7 3RF

Inspection dates 10–11 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Teaching is nearly always good or better.
- The school has taken successful action to raise standards at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Good provision ensures that children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The careful checking of pupils' progress ensures that any prompt action is taken to help any pupil who falls behind.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and work hard in lessons.
- Pupils are provided with a wide range of sporting and musical activities, which encourage a love of learning.
- Good use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils who find learning difficult make good and sometimes exceptional progress in their learning.
- The headteacher, leaders and staff have successfully driven improvements in teaching and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although progress in mathematics is good, it is not quite as strong as that in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 because pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply and develop their mathematics skills to solve problems.
- Teachers sometimes set activities that are too easy for more-able pupils.
- Strategies for engaging with parents and carers are not effective enough to fully engage them in supporting their children's learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils in lessons, at play, at lunch, as they moved around school and in two assemblies.
- Discussions were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, and other governors, a representative of the local authority and the external improvement adviser to the school. Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors held meetings with two groups of pupils, listened to pupils read and checked reading progress records.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including records of the quality of teaching and of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's view of its performance and the school development plan. In addition, records of the meetings of the governing body, safeguarding and reports from the external school improvement adviser were reviewed.
- The inspectors took account of the 56 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), correspondence from parents and 24 responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection.

Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Liz Kissane	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stilton CofE VC Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children that are looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school partway through the school year.
- There have been several changes in staffing over the last year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that teachers use information on pupils' attainment levels to plan activities that are at the right level of difficulty, particularly for the more-able and more-confident learners
 - sharing good practice so that pupils' progress in mathematics more closely matches the rapid progress being made in reading and writing
 - ensuring that teachers' marking of pupils' work provides them with a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve, especially in mathematics
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems in a wide range of subjects and situations.
- Strengthen links with parents and carers by:
 - providing more information on the action being taken to continue to improve the quality of education the school provides
 - developing strategies to engage parents more fully in supporting their children's education.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they are working well within the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. This good progress continues through Key Stage 1, so that pupils' attainment in all subjects is above average at the end of Year 2. This has been a consistent pattern over the last five years.
- At the end of Year 6, in 2012, attainment in mathematics was just below average. Since the dip in attainment in 2012, improvements in teaching have improved the rates at which pupils have progressed. In addition, the school has quickly taken action to provide additional support where needed. This has improved achievement across all year groups. Results for the current Year 6 show a marked improvement and these pupils' attainment is above average.
- Pupils throughout the school are making good progress in mathematics and standards are rising, but this progress is not quite as strong as that in reading and writing in the upper year groups. Although more pupils are now reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics, a few of the most able pupils are not challenged as much as they could be.
- The effective teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) helps to ensure that pupils make good progress in developing essential basic reading skills. The national screening check for pupils at the end of Year 1 indicates that they are performing better than their peers nationally. Pupils become increasingly confident readers who read widely and often.
- Pupils' secure reading skills equip them well to achieve well in writing. Regular sessions, which encourage pupils to produce longer pieces of writing in English lessons, enhance their writing skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, taking into consideration their starting points and capabilities. The school provides many opportunities and additional support that is well focused and matched to their varied and sometimes complex needs. Their progress is regularly checked to make sure that the support can be adapted and changed accordingly. Teachers and additional support staff have high expectations for these pupils.
- The special educational needs coordinator ensures that the needs of pupils who join the school at times other than the start of the year are carefully assessed. Appropriate support is then provided to ensure that the progress of these pupils matches that of their peers.
- There were not enough pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in 2012 to comment on their attainment without identifying them. Current information shows the way in which the funding has been used to provide additional support to meet these pupils' needs is effective.
- Lesson observations, listening to pupils read and inspectors' checks on pupils' work confirm that currently pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the work in pupils' books shows that they do not always apply their mathematical skills well across other subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching continues to improve, as a result of rigorous checking by senior leaders, and teachers' willingness to improve their practice.
- A strong feature of the best teaching is the highly effective use of questioning to deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in a drama lesson with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, the teacher used skilful questioning to help pupils understand the changes that could be made when editing a play script. Again, in an excellent Year 3 lesson, the teacher's skilful and probing questioning helped the pupils' understand how to use lively and imaginative combinations of adjectives to improve their writing skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, consistently good teaching ensures that pupils become enthusiastic learners and make good progress. Adults involve children well in a range of carefully planned activities both indoors and outdoors. The effective teaching of early reading skills provides a secure base for their good progress in later years.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong throughout the school and teachers have very effective strategies for managing behaviour. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities teachers provide for them to work together. This helps to promote their social development.
- Teaching assistants work successfully with teachers to support and improve the learning of all pupils including disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs and those identified by the school for additional support. As a result, these pupils make good progress and their attainment is improving.
- Teaching is very well organised with high expectations. Learning objectives are clear so pupils understand what they are learning and why. Learning tasks engage pupils well. However, in a few classes, the most able pupils and more-confident learners are not always given work that is sufficiently challenging.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and teachers use their marking to celebrate pupils' good work and explain how the work can be improved. These comments however, are more helpful in writing than in mathematics. This means that opportunities are missed to take learning even further forward.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons and around the school are good. Pupils are courteous and friendly, and they show respect for each other and for adults. They play together happily at break times and lunchtimes.
- Pupils are keen to take on roles and responsibilities. They manage the school council, raise money for charity, and act as learning mentors and buddies to befriend others.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average and pupils are punctual at the start of the day.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They have a good knowledge of internet safety and of the many different types of bullying that can occur. Pupils say if bullying

does happen, adults deal with it quickly and effectively.

- Because the school works hard to support the few pupils with behavioural difficulties, lessons are rarely disrupted. These pupils are supported well so they build self-confidence and are fully engaged in lessons.
- Most parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire were positive about the different ways in which the school supports all aspects of their children's development. Concerns from a few regarding pupils' behaviour were not reflected in the comments of pupils or staff or from the majority of parents who expressed a view, indicating that behaviour is good and that their children are kept safe. Parents and carers who spoke informally with the inspectors were supportive of the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has the confidence and support of the staff and governors. All share a determination to continue to improve the school. The accurate evaluation of the school's performance enables leaders to identify areas where improvement is needed. Foremost amongst these is a drive to continue to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards further.
- Successful management action has raised standards after the dip in 2012. Regular checks on pupils' progress ensure that any pupil who is falling behind is quickly identified and given the extra support they need. This has had an immediate and positive impact on the school's performance.
- There is a clear understanding that salary progression is linked closely to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. This information is used to advise the governing body about teachers' pay awards.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Checks made on the quality of teaching and learning are thorough and the outcomes are linked to training opportunities for teachers to further develop their skills. This has been particularly effective in accelerating pupils' progress in reading and writing.
- The taught subjects are well planned and provide a wide and varied range of activities that enrich pupils' experiences, both inside and outside school. The school is rightly proud of the sporting and musical achievements of the pupils. These activities help pupils to extend their academic and social skills and contribute significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Comments from some parents and carers indicate that they feel their points of view are not always heard because they feel communication channels between home and school sometimes fails to promote a good enough understanding of school improvement issues. In order to secure greater cooperation and understanding between home and school, the school is reviewing the links to see what improvements can be made.
- The local authority has confidence in the ability of the school's leadership team to raise standards further and has provided only light-touch support. The school has made good use of external consultants to support the drive for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well through the information that it receives from the

headteacher and from regular visits to the school. Governors regularly check the school's performance and continually challenge senior leaders to raise standards. They understand how well the school is performing compared to similar schools and schools nationally. As a result, they know the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve further. Governors are involved in setting challenging targets for the headteacher. They also make sure that teachers' pay awards are securely linked to the progress that pupils make. They ensure that funding is managed efficiently and used for the purposes intended. Governors are fully aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and of the effect it has on the progress of the pupils who are entitled to it. The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures and policies meet statutory requirements.

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	110821
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	413002

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Springford
Headteacher	Annette Baughan
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
Telephone number	01733 240480
Fax number	01733 240511
Email address	office@stilton.camb.sch.uk

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