

Little Stanion Primary School

Roman Road, Little Stanion, Corby, NN18 8FY

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' attainment in writing by the end of Year 2 in 2013 is too low.
- Teaching requires improvement because pupils' progress over the past year is inconsistent, especially in writing and for boys.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding do not always make as much progress as other groups of pupils.
- Sometimes work given is too easy for more able pupils or too difficult for the less able, and teachers do not always make their expectations about the quality and quantity of work to be completed sufficiently clear.
- Teaching assistants do not always promote effective learning with the groups of pupils they work with.
- Leadership and management require improvement because checks on the quality of teaching and support have not been sufficiently effective in ensuring that teaching, and therefore achievement in English and mathematics, is consistently good.
- Pupils' attendance is improving but remains too far below the national average.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving and on the way to becoming good; pupils new to the school, including those who speak English as an additional language, are welcomed into the school and make progress which is often as good as other pupils and sometimes better.
- Children have settled well in Reception and pupils in the current Years 5 and 6 have made good progress from their different starting points.
- The teaching of letters and the sounds is good and reading is a strength of the school.
- Teachers and other staff work hard to make learning enjoyable. Pupils express their views confidently and really enjoy the topics they do.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe and secure in school and free from bullying. Pupils say that any issues are quickly dealt with by staff. Relationships are harmonious and respectful.
- Leaders plan carefully to accommodate the rapidly growing numbers of pupils and assess the needs of individual children quickly when they arrive.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher. He also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. A discussion was held with a representative from the local authority by telephone.
- The inspector took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents, including the school improvement plans, school checks on teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Little Stanion Primary School opened in September 2012. Nearly one third of the pupils attend from the local village with the rest travelling from further afield.
- Although growing rapidly, this is a smaller-than-average primary school. It opened with 69 pupils but numbers have increased sharply since then and are set to increase further. For example, Year 2 group tripled in size in the period between the school opening and the end of the first summer term.
- The pupils are taught in five classes: Reception; Year 1; Year 2; Year 3; and Years 4, 5 and 6.
- A nursery opened in January 2013, next to the reception class. This is being inspected separately.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage but about one quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Some of these pupils have limited previous experience of formal education in a school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is a little above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups, is below average. Currently, the school has no pupils who are in the care of the local authority.
- There were not enough pupils in Year 6 in 2012, or published results, to report whether the government's current floor standards were met or not (these set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in writing, improve, by:
 - improving the match of activities to pupils' different needs, making sure that work is not too easy or difficult, so that the pace of learning does not dip
 - making sure that teaching assistants consistently promote effective learning with the groups of children they work with
 - ensuring teachers encourage all pupils to improve the quality and quantity of their writing, especially boys.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - giving teaching staff individual support according to their needs, for example through coaching and observation of high-quality practice
 - sharpening the focus of leaders' lesson observations so that greater emphasis is given to assessing the impact on pupils' achievement
 - refining the support for different individuals and groups of pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, to help them raise their attainment
 - working more closely with parents to raise attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is not yet consistently good. Pupil's progress in writing over the past year, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and for boys, is weaker than it is in other subjects, and has been identified by leaders as a focus for development.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is below average, particularly in writing. The samples of work seen during the inspection show that some pupils, particularly the more able, do not get sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills both in literacy lessons and other subjects. Attainment in reading and mathematics is higher than it is in writing
- The school's records show that, across the school as a whole, different groups of pupils do not always progress at the same rate. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who are more able, make progress which is broadly similar to other pupils in the school.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 in 2013 to report on their results without identifying individuals. For the same reason, it is not possible to comment on the progress of the very small numbers of pupils eligible for the pupil premium. At the time of the inspection, the school had not received any of the additional funds made available by the government to support these pupils.
- Pupils in the current Years 5 and 6 have made the strongest progress from their starting points. Good progress is reflected in the school records and pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most recent results from the Year 1 phonics screening check show that most pupils achieved the expected standard. This reflects good teaching of letters and their sounds for younger children. Younger readers in Years 1 and 2, including those who speak English as an additional language, use these skills well to help them to read words. On a few occasions they get stuck because they come across vocabulary they do not understand. However, they typically persevere and want to read on.
- Older pupils confidently use their multiplication and division skills to solve problems and more able pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between 'simile' and 'metaphor'. They read widely and talk enthusiastically about different books and why they like them. They can name their favourite authors and discuss their styles of writing. They use the school library confidently to choose their books.
- Children in Reception have quickly settled into class routines because teachers manage them well. They work well together when building towers with bricks. Teachers work effectively, particularly when helping children to extend their vocabulary, for example when reading about *Elmer the Elephant*.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet sufficiently strong to promote good progress across the school. There are times in lessons when the pace of learning slows, for example when expectations about what should be completed in the time available are unclear. On a few other occasions pupils' independent writing is inhibited because the time given for this activity is not long enough.

- Activities are not always designed well enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. This happens for example, when lower attaining pupils struggle to complete sums, and when more able pupils are given too much direction.
- At times, the guidance teaching assistants give to individual pupils is not effective so that lower attaining pupils complete too little work independently in the time available. There are, however, examples of teaching assistants working well with individual pupils for example, to help them improve their basic number skills or to keep them focused on their work but this good practice is not consistently evident in all cases.
- Lessons in Reception and across Key Stage 1 designed to teach pupils letters and their sounds are brisk and purposeful. As a result the pupils are highly engaged and motivated to share what they learn. Pupils across the school are encouraged to say what they think and to recognize each others' contributions. Pupils use these skills particularly well in their reading.
- At the time of the inspection, pupils had new targets to help them to direct their own learning and judge for themselves how well they had done. These were used effectively with older pupils, for example, in mathematics when completing problems. These pupils commented that they valued the positive comments made by teachers from marking (stars) and try to make improvements to their work (wishes). This, together with teachers' thoughtful approach to lesson planning, ensures pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently strong across the school.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and pupils have a great deal of trust in the adults who look after them. Teachers manage pupils well and their enthusiasm and inventiveness result in pupils enjoying learning, particularly topic work, for example, when part of classroom was turned into a Viking longboat and house.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say that they get on well with each other and welcome new children into the school regardless of their background. They demonstrate in their positive attitudes and behaviour towards each other that discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils are well mannered, friendly and courteous in and around the school. At play times there is a good range of activities including tennis, football and skipping. Pupils also comment that sport is promoted well in after school clubs and that they learn about keeping fit and healthy.
- Pupils confirm that they feel safe and secure in school and that there is an absence of bullying. They know about the different ways in which they could be bullied, and talk knowledgeably about what they learned when they had an e-safety day. Older pupils understood the rules necessary to ensure that they were kept safe during a residential visit.
- Parents, carers and staff confirm that pupils' behaviour and safety are strengths of the school. Incident logs show few incidents of misbehaviour and that these are dealt with positively. Pupils' comments confirm that it is very rare for learning to be interrupted by any inappropriate behaviour.
- In lessons, there are a few occasion when learning slows because some pupils find it difficult to work independently without any direct support from adults.

- Attendance is below average. Leaders have analysed absence data and are taking steps to improve pupils' attendance. This includes working with families who have recently come into the area. Leaders recognise the importance of continuing to work to ensure all families understand the importance of sending the children regularly to school.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management have not ensured that teaching is good enough to enable pupils to make rapid progress and achieve well. The school's records show that strengths and weaknesses of teaching are carefully analysed and joint observations with the headteacher confirm the accuracy of these judgements. However, this and other support has not yet ensured that learning activities meet the needs of different groups of pupils equally well. Support for individual staff has not yet been fully effective.
- School improvement plans to promote improvement are well matched to key areas of weakness. The school's analysis of strengths and weaknesses is strengthening as more information becomes available about pupils' progress. This has been complicated because several pupils have joined the school with little information about their prior attainment. Appropriate procedures have been developed to plug this gap.
- Leaders have drawn up clear plans to expand the use of sports coaches to work in the school when the funding arrives.
- Staff work well as a team. Subject leaders are new to their roles but have led developments well in the past year and are ready to change and open to new ideas. The school has responded very positively to the many challenges posed by the need to establish their new school in the community, ensure it operates smoothly and that pupils feel secure and cope with the doubling of pupil numbers over the past year. Some teachers comment that they are proud to work in the school. Common strategies for managing pupils effectively and rewarding effort are well established across the school.
- Assemblies provide pupils with opportunities to welcome those new to the school regardless of their cultural background and to value friendship. This good attention to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps the pupils to settle quickly when they start in the school.
- The local authority has made two brief visits to the school to discuss progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are developing their role securely and have attended a broad range of training to support this. They bring a valuable range of skills to help leaders move the school forward. They are beginning to question more deeply about how well pupils are doing from the progress information they receive. Governors have been faced with some difficult spending decisions arising from the school's uncertain funding arrangements. However, additional support has been provided, for example, to improve individual pupils' understanding of letters and their sounds, and governors have clear plans for how they will allocate the pupil premium funding when it arrives. Governors ensure that the performance management of the headteacher is carried out and have made decisions on whether or not teachers should move up the salary scale. They have checked to ensure that the school follows the required procedures concerning the safeguarding of children.

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	135283
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	424935

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola White
Headteacher	Helen Williams
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01536 215204
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