

Somerset Bridge Primary School

Stockmoor Drive, Bridgewater, Somerset, TA6 6AH

Inspection dates 10–11 October 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.

- Strong leadership and a relentless drive for improvement have resulted in significant improvements being made across the school since the previous inspection.
- Pupils make consistently good progress from low starting points, which means they achieve well and leave Year 6 well in line with what is expected for their age in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Lessons are lively and inspiring so that they excite and motivate pupils to learn effectively.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because there is a strong focus on developing their personal and social skills so they are really ready to learn.
- Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. They enjoy their learning and say they feel very safe.
- The school has carefully utilised new funding to plan and implement a programme of progressive skills development in a range of sports to enable more pupils to participate effectively and enjoy healthy lifestyles.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, are committed to improvement. Staff work enthusiastically and competently to meet the challenging, but achievable, targets that have been set.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Although attainment in English has significantly improved, pupils do not do as well in writing as they do in reading.
- Pupils have a rather limited vocabulary and do not always have sufficient opportunities to express themselves orally in class and explore and experiment with new words.
- Despite having good opportunities to write across other subjects, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in order to expand their creativity.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, and curriculum leaders. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority and an interview took place with a local leader of education.
- The inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also examined the results of a survey the school had carried out at the end of the last school year. Informal conversations were also held with some parents and carers before school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector analysed nine questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Christine Huard, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector
Robert Arnold	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. Since opening in 2010, it has expanded from 150 to 360 pupils and is still growing.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, although the proportion of pupils from other backgrounds has increased significantly in the last two years. The percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language is now above average. The main home language of these pupils is Polish.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The main areas of concern are behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, and speech, language and communication difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding given to the school for children known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is high.
- Many more pupils than seen in most schools join the school during the school year.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a nursery on the school site which is not part of the school and will be subject to a separate inspection.
- With exception of the headteacher, who has been in post for three years, the senior leadership team has been completely restructured since the previous inspection in 2011. A new Chair of the Governing Body has also been elected.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by:
 - encouraging pupils to fully participate in class discussions and explore and experiment with words in order to develop their vocabulary
 - providing them with more opportunities to write at length in order to develop their creativity.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start school, their levels of attainment are well below those expected for their age particularly in personal, social and emotional development, and communication and literacy skills. Children move into Year 1 having made good progress although they are still below average for their age.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school because teaching is consistently good and enables them to learn effectively. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily each year since the previous inspection and in 2013 pupils attained levels of attainment well in excess of those in 2012.
- The systematic development of pupils' calculation skills has been highly effective and increased emphasis has been given to the development of pupils' mathematical problem solving and investigative skills. These improvements have considerably accelerated pupils' progress. This was evident in the vastly improved attainment of Year 6 pupils in 2013 when they reached levels above the 2012 national average.
- Reading is taught well and pupils in Year 1 reached levels of attainment well above the national average in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) check in both 2012 and 2013. Older pupils enjoy reading and attain standards well in line with national averages.
- Attainment and progress in writing have improved significantly over the last two years and pupils attained average levels in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test in 2013. However, pupils have a limited vocabulary and they are not always encouraged to respond at length during class discussions and so explore and experiment with words in order to extend their vocabulary. In addition, although pupils now have opportunities to write across many different subjects they do not always have enough chances to write at length to develop their creativity.
- Across the school there is very little difference in the progress that different groups of pupils make. This is because the school tracks all pupils' progress meticulously and puts in appropriate support and challenge as necessary.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make good and sometimes outstanding progress in their learning because their needs are assessed very well and plans put in place quickly to enable them to receive the right support in order to address their needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because good support is provided for them in acquiring English language skills.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding make similar progress to their peers in English. In 2012, there was a significant gap between the progress made in mathematics by pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils. In 2013, because of action taken by the school to improve mathematics across the school this gap has closed significantly to a little over one term's difference.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved greatly since the previous inspection and now enables pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers' enthusiasm and commitment shine through in lessons. Because they work hard to make learning interesting and develop positive relationships with their classes, pupils are keen to learn.
- Teachers know exactly what they want their pupils to learn and their explanations are clear and based on their good subject knowledge. As a consequence, pupils are confident about tackling their work. Teachers make skilful use of questions to probe pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 focusing on the use of adverbs, the teacher expected her pupils to explain their answers clearly and also used examples of the class book,

How to Train Your Dragon, to enliven and enrich their learning.

- Teachers have a well-developed awareness of the learning needs of all their pupils, particularly those who may be disabled or who have special educational needs. This stems from rigorous assessment procedures. As a result they successfully pinpoint exactly what additional support or challenge is needed in order to drive pupils' learning on further.
- It is very evident that pupils like and respect their teachers and that these feelings are reciprocated. This benefits pupils' self-esteem, motivation and learning. The work of teaching assistants has developed well since the previous inspection and these key staff work in close partnership with teachers to provide effective support for pupils' learning.
- Marking is thorough and provides pupils with well-judged guidance about how to improve.
- Very occasionally pupils' progress is restricted when opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to provide more extended contributions during class discussions to develop pupils' language skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In the Reception classes, children's personal and social skills are promoted extremely well. As a result they are learning to behave well, share willingly and listen attentively.
- Across the school, pupils' behaviour is good. They try their best in lessons and rise to the challenges. For example, pupils in Year 3 were asked to decide the best ways for Henry to solve his main problems after defeating Richard at the Battle of Bosworth Field. They persevered, used appropriate resources effectively and demonstrated a strong resilience in their efforts to solve the problems set.
- Pupils play happily together at break and lunchtimes. They are polite, well mannered and show good concern and care for each other. They are keen and enthusiastic learners and only very occasionally do some of the younger pupils become distracted and a little off task in their lessons.
- Pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment in their learning are reflected very well in their improved attendance and good punctuality.
- The pupils say there is no bullying and rarely any poor behaviour. They have a secure knowledge of the different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying and persistent name calling or taunting. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including when they are using the internet.
- The school's behaviour logs record any misdemeanours meticulously. These confirm that there are rarely any serious behavioural incidents and that if they should occur they are dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and parents and carers spoken to or contributing to the Parent View website are very confident that their children are safe in school. No concerns about their safety were raised.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides extremely strong leadership. He has not flinched from making difficult decisions in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- In the last two years, the senior leadership team has been completely restructured so that it is now robust and rigorous in its monitoring of the school's performance. The headteacher, the senior leadership team, staff and governing body are all ambitious for the school and all staff are committed to the school's aim to become outstanding.
- The school has significantly improved standards since the previous inspection two years ago. This year, for the first time, some Year 6 pupils attained Level 6 in mathematics, demonstrating

excellent progress given their starting points. Although there is still work to be done in raising standards in writing, the school's documentation shows that achievement is improving further and demonstrates a strong capacity for further improvement.

- The school has reviewed its curriculum to ensure it makes good provision for pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development, as well as being more relevant and inspiring for them. Pupils' learning and personal development are supported by a wide range of educational visits and visitors that enrich their experiences and often act as a springboard for interesting work across the curriculum.
 - The school's work is monitored closely by all senior and subject leaders. There is a rigorous programme of lesson observations, work scrutiny and discussions about pupils' progress. This means that the school has a clear picture of how well the school is doing. The targets that are set for teachers are checked regularly and closely linked to teachers' progression through the salary scales.
 - The school's self-evaluation is extremely accurate and this means that priorities in school improvement planning are entirely appropriate.
 - Safeguarding is of high priority in the school and all statutory requirements are met. The school promotes equal opportunities effectively ensuring that all pupils have the same opportunities and there is no discrimination. As a result, there are minimal differences in the progress pupils make; even so the school is at all times seeking to eradicate these.
 - Pupil premium funding is used highly effectively to benefit the pupils for whom it is provided. For example, investment in the Malachi Specialist Family Support to provide for pupils with more particular needs has been extremely successful in building self-esteem and self-confidence and consequently in accelerating pupils' progress. Other initiatives, such as investment in an extra teacher, more teaching assistants, and subsidising school visits have all played their part in helping progress improve.
 - The school has carefully thought through how the new sports funding should be spent so that it continues to benefit pupils in the long term. By appointing specialist sports coaches, governors have become involved in planning a programme which will not only teach pupils a range of skills but also ensure that teachers acquire the necessary expertise to be able to build on this programme when the funding expires.
 - The local authority has provided an appropriate level of support to the school, particularly in relation to its rapid expansion, and ensures that the new leadership team is receiving necessary training to enable it to fulfil its role effectively.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body challenges the performance of the school effectively and is supportive and knowledgeable. Governors understand the school's strengths, including how it compares with other schools, and where it needs to improve. They check carefully that teaching meets the required standards and ensure that there is a clear link between how well teachers are paid and how well pupils achieve. They monitor the finances of the school conscientiously. They are active in deciding how pupil premium funding is used and check on the impact of this on the pupils' learning and progress. Governors undertake appropriate training to ensure they are better able to carry out their roles.
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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	123695
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	426761

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	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Darren Argrave
Headteacher	Kevin Bryant
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 September 2011
Telephone number	01276 422100
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