

Stanton Road Primary School

Stanton Road, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside, CH63 3HW

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Teaching is not yet good. Pupils, particularly the most able, are not always given work that is challenging them to reach their full potential. Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to work collaboratively to solve problems for themselves and work independently of the teacher.
- Standards reached by the end of Year 6 are broadly average in English and mathematics. Pupils' progress from their various starting points requires improvement because too few pupils make more than the progress expected of them.
- The progress pupils make in Key Stage 1 in applying their reading skills is hampered by the way pupils are grouped for guided reading making it difficult to precisely meet the needs of all pupils, especially the most able.
- Pupils are not always given the time to act on the advice and guidance given in teachers' marking of work.
- Subject leaders are not yet fully involved in tackling weaknesses in teaching and driving improvement in teaching and learning in their subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is broadly average and improving. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and good relationships with each other and with adults in the school. They feel safe in school.
- The acting headteacher provides very clear direction in this improving school.
- The leadership team monitor teaching and learning closely and have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve further. As a result of the work they have done, standards have recently risen and progress has accelerated in both English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, including short visits to other activities led by teachers and trained assistants. Five of these observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Two groups of pupils met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior leaders. Meetings were conducted with the Chair, vice chair and members of the governing body and with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 58 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and correspondence from parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and read a range of documents. These included documents about the school's strategies to enable leaders to gain an accurate view of its performance, school improvement plans, pupils' current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Judith Tolley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Lawrence

Additional Inspector

John Shutt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stanton Road is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is lower than that usually found.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school has a number of awards including Healthy School status, Activemark ,Eco Schools Green Flag Status and the Enterprise Award
- The school hosts breakfast and after-school clubs which are managed privately and inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the last inspection there have been significant changes in staff. The acting headteacher has been in post since November 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards that pupils reach and increase the rate of progress further in English and mathematics by:
 - reviewing the arrangements for teaching early reading so that the needs of groups of pupils of differing ability are more closely met in order to improve their reading more rapidly
 - ensuring pupils are always given precisely the right level of challenge to achieve their potential, particularly the most able
 - making sure pupils are always given regular opportunities to act upon the guidance they are given to improve their work
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to solve problems for themselves and to share their conclusions with others.
- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring subject leaders for mathematics and English are fully involved in working alongside teachers to improve teachers' practice.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them from their starting points compares well with national figures but fewer pupils than nationally make more than the progress expected of them. Most children enter the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge typical of those expected for their age. They make the progress expected of them during the Early Years Foundation Stage overall. They make particularly good progress in listening, understanding and in forming relationships, so that the majority of pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are typical for their age and they are well prepared for the Key Stage 1 curriculum.
- By the end of Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average.
- Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards have remained broadly average over the last three years. In 2013 there was a rise in the standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 and end of Year 2 and the proportion of pupils making more than expected progress compared favourably to national figures.
- The most-able pupils make the progress expected of them from their starting points in mathematics, in reading and in writing, with some reaching the highest levels by the end of Year 6. In lessons, however, opportunities are limited for these pupils to apply their learning in a variety of contexts to increase their independence as learners and challenge them fully.
- Pupils write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences and use a good range of vocabulary and structures.
- Pupils are taught phonics (the sounds that letters make) effectively and are able to apply their knowledge in reading and writing. However, in Key Stage 1, the progress made by the most able in applying their reading skills is slowed in guided reading groups. This is because there is a very wide range of ability within the groups and their needs cannot always be met precisely enough to move their learning on swiftly.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved recently, with all pupils now making the progress expected of them.
- Pupils of all ages, even the youngest, are enthusiastic about their reading. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read a variety of texts with a good level of fluency and understanding. Most are able to talk in detail about what they have read, and can compare and contrast books they have enjoyed.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same expected progress as their peers but the less-able pupils make swifter progress than the rest as result of the extra help they are given both in class and in small groups.
- The extra support, such as extra help in the classroom and support from teaching assistants, that the school provides with the additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium enables these pupils to reach their targets and to make the same expected progress as their peers. Gaps between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in English and mathematics and their class mates have closed.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good across the school. Although there is some outstanding practice, teaching over time is too variable.
- Teachers present new ideas clearly and activities are well designed to engage pupils' interest. For instance, Reception class children were entirely engaged by activities related to their topic of jungle animals, going on an 'expedition' to find these animals in the school grounds.
- In Year 1 and 2 pupils made outstanding progress in learning new combinations of letters and the sounds they represent because of a very well planned series of activities which were fun and

very well matched to their needs. However, this is not always the case; on occasions work does not always challenge the most-able pupils sufficiently.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together. They ask pupils searching questions to get them thinking and to see how much they have understood or to challenge them to solve problems for themselves. For instance, in a Year 4 and 5 mathematics lesson, pupils interpreted bar charts and worked out how to make their own to show the results of a class survey they had done about their favourite Roald Dahl books. However, in some lessons, opportunities are missed to enable pupils to work things out for themselves.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are instances of good practice within the school. However, although marking gives pupils the guidance they need to improve, pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond to this.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement; it is particularly strong when pupils work collaboratively and can learn from each other, but opportunities are missed to develop pupils' confidence and independence as learners in this way.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good. Pupils are considerate to each other and work and play very well together. Pupils support each other well, for example, when working with a partner. They take responsibility very seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school, for example, as school councillors and as play leaders and buddies for younger children. They are proud of their achievements, for example, in improving the playground and making a pond area for the youngest children.
- Disruption to lessons is rare and pupils work responsibly and with enthusiasm, especially when given the opportunity to work independently of the teacher or in small groups to solve problems themselves. They listen carefully to others and respect each other's views.
- Pupils have good relationships with adults; they feel safe and are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber-bullying that can take place and know how to deal with it.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They value the wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, that are provided and which have a positive impact on their health and well-being.
- Attendance is broadly average. It has improved over the last three years. Persistent absence has decreased as a result of the good work the school is doing in encouraging attendance and pursuing those families whose children do not attend regularly enough.
- Pupils who may have challenging behaviour are supported effectively to make good choices and, as a result, incidences of poor behaviour are very rare.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although she has been in post for a very short time, the acting headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff, provides very clear direction. The members of the leadership team have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what could be improved further based on a rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and close monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result standards have recently improved and progress accelerated in both English and mathematics.
- There are detailed action plans focused on raising standards and on improving teaching and learning but it is too early to see the full impact of this. Nonetheless, the school is well placed to improve further.
- Teaching and learning are closely monitored by senior leaders, and teachers new to the school are effectively supported. Teachers work well together in year group teams to plan lessons, and

this is successful in ensuring consistency of approach across classes.

- Subject leaders are involved in checking the school's performance in their subjects through lesson observations, checking teachers' planning and tracking pupils' progress. They are at the early stages of holding teachers to account and this is having a positive impact upon progress. However, they are not yet fully involved in working alongside teachers to improve practice in teaching and learning in their subjects. This is a key reason why teaching requires improvement and is not yet good.
- The senior leadership team have a detailed analysis of pupils' progress and this is used effectively to trigger timely interventions for pupils. A comprehensive system of appraisal and performance management has been adopted which is linked to the pay scales and is used to identify training for teachers.
- Safeguarding meets government requirements, and discrimination in all its forms is rejected.
- The school works very well with local agencies, the local network of schools, including the high school, and with parents to ensure that all pupils settle well to learning. This includes detailed information for parents through the school website and newsletters as well as workshops for parents so that they can help their children with their learning at home. The school is committed to providing an equal opportunity for every pupil. For instance, some pupil premium funding is used to enable these pupils to participate in visits and other activities designed to enrich their learning.
- The curriculum requires improvement because there are weaknesses which prevent the most able from doing as well as they might. The recent introduction of a systematic approach to teaching phonics and the new reading scheme are having a positive impact upon standards and progress in reading and writing overall but is not followed up effectively enough in guided reading sessions in Key Stage 1 classes. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of activities and visits out of school that enhance pupils' learning and which promote pupils' physical well-being and their personal development. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in sports, languages, music and physical education.
- The new primary sport funding is being used well to provide extra coaching for sports activities in the playground and after school. This is not only promoting pupils' physical development and well-being effectively but also encouraging some pupils to join in who might not otherwise do so.
- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided very effective support for this school to ensure continued improvement during the headteacher's absence and a smooth transition when the headteacher returns.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need to be improved. Governors are fully involved in checking the school's performance, including data that shows pupils' attainment and progress. They have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and the performance of staff, including how good performance is rewarded, and any underperformance is tackled. The efficiency of spending is scrutinised, for instance, the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. They are actively involved in the life of the school and hold leaders to account. The governing body has been reconstituted very recently so that it is too early to see the impact of the challenge they provide.

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	105006
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	426220

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	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Gordon
Acting Headteacher	Deborah Richards
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2008
Telephone number	0151 3341398
Fax number	0151 3341398
Email address	schooloffice@stantonroad.wirral.sch.uk

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