

Stanford Junior School

Stanford Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 5PR

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2014

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.

- Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching over time is good.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has been much higher than the national average for the past three years. Pupils achieve particularly well in reading and mathematics.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. A high proportion of pupils secured high levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2013. Improvements in the teaching of writing have increased pupils' progress over the past year.
- The school has successfully narrowed the gap between the achievement of those pupils eligible for support from additional government funding and their classmates.
- The school is a happy and cohesive community. Pupils are keen to learn and they enjoy school. They behave very well and feel safe and secure.
- Leaders and governors have maintained pupils' good achievement. They have secured improvements in the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- The governing body provides highly effective levels of support and challenge for school leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few cases, teachers' expectations of presentation, or of what pupils can achieve, are not high enough.
- Sometimes, teachers are too slow to identify and help those pupils whose progress is slowing during lessons.
- Marking does not always give pupils sufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.
- Subject leaders do not play a big enough role in monitoring the quality of teaching and checking the progress of pupils in their subjects.
- Arrangements for communicating with some groups of parents and carers are not effective.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or part-lessons, including two observations carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, parents and carers, pupils and a representative of the local authority. Meetings were also held with the Chair of the Governing Body and an additional governor.
- Inspectors took account of 170 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), responses to a recent school survey and a number of letters and emails sent by parents and carers. Inspectors also took account of 11 staff questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and analysed a range of documents and policies including the school improvement plan, information about pupils’ progress, attendance records, and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils’ work provided by the school, as well as their work in lessons. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Velia Hartland

Additional Inspector

Simon Hughes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for additional funding known as pupil premium is below average. (Pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.)
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a privately run after-school club on site, which will be inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers' expectations of pupils' work are consistently high
 - all teachers respond promptly in lessons to pupils who are finding the work too easy or too difficult
 - teachers consistently provide good-quality feedback to pupils about what they have done well in their work and how they can improve their work further.
- Strengthen the role played by subject leaders in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Review and improve existing arrangements to communicate with parents and carers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school in Year 3 with knowledge and skills which are above average. They make good progress to reach levels of attainment which are much higher than the national average by the end of Year 6. School information indicates that pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to achieve similar levels of attainment in 2014.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics has been substantially higher than the national average, and rising, for the past three years. Pupils learn how to use a wide range of strategies to solve mathematical problems confidently and accurately.
- Pupils make very rapid progress in reading. Reading is given a high profile by the school and parents and carers provide strong support for their children's reading at home. As a result, pupils enjoy reading very much and talk about books with enthusiasm and pleasure. Attainment in reading has been above average for the last three years and has been substantially higher than the national average for the last two years.
- In the past, pupils have made slower progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. A range of effective strategies has been put in place, including training for teachers and new guidance about the teaching of handwriting. As a result, pupils' progress in writing has accelerated rapidly, particularly in the older year groups. School information indicates that attainment in writing at the end of Year 6 is on track to increase in 2014, particularly at the higher levels.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and achieve well. In 2013, the proportion of pupils attaining the high levels in the national tests was substantially higher than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. School information indicates that these high levels of achievement are likely to be sustained in 2014, with more pupils on track to attain the highest levels in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. The inclusion leader knows the pupils very well and understands their needs.
- In 2013, pupils in Year 6 who were eligible to benefit from additional funding made slower progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment was about two years behind their peers in writing and mathematics, and about eight months behind in reading. While the proportion of pupils eligible to benefit from support in this year group was small, the leadership has been quick to respond. They have made the achievement of these pupils a priority for development. As a result, the progress made by these pupils across the school is now close to, or better than, their classmates in both mathematics and English, and the gap in attainment has narrowed rapidly.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because there are small differences in the progress made by pupils in different classes.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good, and some is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons which are stimulating and fun, so that pupils enjoy learning. All pupils, including the most able, think hard when teachers challenge them to answer difficult questions and set them demanding tasks.
- Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and respond promptly when pupils' learning is slowing during lessons. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, the teacher noticed that one pupil was struggling to remember how to use a number line to solve a mathematics problem. Prompt help meant that no time was lost in her learning and she went on to complete the problem successfully.
- The teaching of reading is well established and effective. Additional activities, such as book groups during lunchtime breaks, provide enjoyable opportunities for pupils to talk about books. Pupils read regularly and are well supported at home by their parents and carers.

- Teachers are confident about teaching mathematics. Training has been used well to ensure that teachers' knowledge is up to date. The teaching of mathematics is planned effectively so that pupils' understanding is strengthened and deepened as they move up through the year groups.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well. They have a good understanding of their role in the classroom and provide valuable support for pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because there are small variations in the quality of teaching between some classes and there is not enough outstanding teaching.
- The recent school focus on marking means that some teachers' marking is of high quality. Prompt and regular feedback means that pupils know what they have done well. They are given clear pointers about how they can improve their work, as well as the time to respond to teachers' comments. This is improving the quality and presentation of pupils' work. However, variations in the quality of marking remain, leading to some differences in the quality and presentation of pupils' work.
- Occasionally, teachers' expectations of the amount of work pupils can produce during lessons, and of the presentation of written work, are not high enough. Sometimes, the work set for pupils is too easy. A few teachers do not always make changes to the lesson quickly enough when pupils find the work difficult or have lost concentration.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are courteous, keen to learn and behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. Pupils work together cooperatively and listen to each other with respect. They are sensitive to the needs of others and look after their friends well.
- Pupils say that they feel happy, safe and well cared for in school. Most parents and carers who completed the online survey (Parent View), and almost all those who completed a recent school survey, agree with this view and consider pupils to be well behaved.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how they can help to keep themselves safe and are confident about the help provided by adults.
- Pupils are well informed about different types of bullying. They say that bullying does happen occasionally but that, when it does occur, adults are quick to sort it out. Discrimination is not tolerated. School records show that the school responds appropriately to any incidents of poor behaviour and provides high levels of care and understanding.
- Attendance is typically above the national average. A dip in attendance to average levels in 2013 has been reversed, so that current attendance levels are above the national average. This is because the school's procedures for checking pupils' attendance are robust, with support provided promptly where needed.
- The school's learning mentors provide high-quality and successful support for pupils, including those with a range of additional needs. As a result, there have been marked improvements in the attendance and progress of the pupils they support.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because some pupils chat during lessons, so that their progress slows.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body have ensured that good levels of achievement have been maintained. The school's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all its pupils is reflected in its successful drive to improve the achievement of those pupils supported by additional funding.
- Pupils learn about a wide range of subjects. Trips and events are used effectively to increase pupils' interest and their motivation to learn more about the world. There are many opportunities

for pupils to explore and develop their creativity. The school plays an active part in the local community and events, such as the school's participation in the Brighton Festival, contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The primary school sports funding is used appropriately. For example, equipment has been purchased for the lower playground to increase pupils' engagement in sport during playtimes and to enhance their overall fitness levels. The success of this was evident during the inspection, with many pupils enthusiastically participating in football and cricket games. The appointment of a specialist teacher has increased the range of sports available to pupils and the school provides an extensive range of sports clubs. These are very much enjoyed by the pupils and the numbers of pupils participating have increased.
- The recently appointed subject leaders have made a good start and their roles have developed well over the last year. They know what the school is doing well and which aspects of their subjects need to be improved because they have been well informed by senior leaders. However, as yet, they are over-reliant on senior leaders to analyse information about pupils' achievement in relation to other schools nationally.
- The local authority has provided valuable support, such as training for senior leaders to develop their role in the school's development.
- Almost all the parents and carers who completed a recent school survey, and the majority of those who completed the online survey, consider the school to be well led and managed. However, a minority are not as convinced. While many parents and carers who spoke with inspectors during the inspection expressed confidence in the school, several raised concerns, particularly about the quality of communication between the school and parents and carers.
- Inspectors found that the school provides a wide range of information for parents and carers. However, the school agrees that more could be done to improve communication, particularly for those parents and carers who find it difficult to get into school during the school day.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The role played by the governing body is a particular strength of the school. The Chair of the Governing Body is experienced and knowledgeable, and provides a strong lead for her fellow governors. Governors have an accurate view of the school's performance in relation to schools nationally. They regularly consider and discuss information about pupils' performance and ask senior leaders pertinent and searching questions. The governors know how additional funds are spent and the Chair of the Governing Body ensures a sharp focus on the difference funds are making to pupils' achievement and well-being. They are well informed about how pupil premium funding has been used to raise pupils' achievement and receive regular updates from senior leaders. The governing body knows how salary progression is being used to support and reward teachers' practice because they are given regular reports. Safeguarding arrangements 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	114376
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	431395

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	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise Anderson
Headteacher	Gina Hutchins
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2009
Telephone number	01273 565570
Fax number	01273 566031
Email address	office@stanfordjun.brighton-hove.sch.uk

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