

Stillington Primary School

Main Street, Stillington, York, North Yorkshire, YO61 1LA

Inspection dates 20–21 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Leaders and managers have not been fully successful in promoting equal opportunities and so the progress of pupils in Key Stage 2 has not been as good as elsewhere in the school.
- Progress in mathematics and writing is not as fast as it is in reading.
- Teaching over time requires improvement. It has not been good enough to ensure that all pupils have achieved as well as they could.
- Some work is too easy for some pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Some of the changes to teaching and staffing are too recent to have secured improvements in pupils' achievement in the school assessments and national tests.
- In mathematics, pupils do not always master the basic knowledge and skills they need to make good progress.
- Some pupils in Key Stage 2 do not always make the improvements teachers recommend when marking their work.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practice their writing skills in other subjects.
- Plans for improvement do not include precise measures for judging the success of the school's actions.

The school has the following strengths

- Good teaching in early years and Key Stage 1 helps pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy reading and standards in reading are high.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and the school ensures that pupils are very safe.
- Determined leadership by the headteacher, supported by the governing body has guided the school through a very unsettled period.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, and a representative from the local authority. He also met the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. He also held discussions with the early years leader and the school's middle leaders.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including the school's improvement plan; the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance; the school's data relating to pupil progress; the work in pupils' books and folders and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning and listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read. The inspector conducted one lesson observation jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector took account of 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 11 questionnaires completed by the staff.
- The inspector considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to teachers' performance and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Peter Eves, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school has experienced a period of significant staffing turbulence during the last academic year.
- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or cared for by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or with special educational needs is smaller than average.
- At the time of the inspection all of the pupils were of White British origin and none spoke English as an additional language. There is also a mixed-age group class for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Children in the Reception class attend the early year's provision full time and are in a mixed-age class with Years 1 and 2.
- The government's current floor standards do not apply to this school because it has a very small number of pupils with published results.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 so that it is consistently good or better and so accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - giving pupils work that is more demanding and which would allow them to make good or better progress
 - making sure that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills in all subjects
 - ensuring that pupils always respond to the suggestions for improving their work that teachers make when marking their work
 - ensuring that all pupils securely master their basic mathematical skills.
- Strengthen leadership and management by including precise measures in plans for improvement that would allow the success of actions to be accurately judged.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school has been led by a resolute headteacher and governing body during a turbulent period in the last academic year. A succession of problems arose including significant staffing changes and absences that impacted on pupils in Key Stage 2. The headteacher and governors reacted quickly to limit the effect of these issues and are steering the school back towards its previously good standards.
- The school is committed to the well-being of all groups of pupils and has a clear desire to promote equal opportunities and to tackle discrimination. However, this aspiration has not yet ensured that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress and attain their highest possible standards.
- All the current staff contribute to the leadership and management of the school. Middle leaders play an effective role in planning and monitoring improvements in their subjects and in making sure that the school is a calm, caring and safe place where teachers are determined to improve and where pupils try their hardest.
- There are well-understood systems in place to monitor pupil progress and to identify pupils who are falling behind. This allows swift action to be taken and support to be provided to help them catch up. The school sets ambitious targets for pupil progress and attainment and data examined during the inspection indicate that pupils in early years and Years 1 to 4 are on track to meet these targets. The progress of a small number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 has been affected by staff changes in the last academic year and these pupils may not reach their targets.
- Leaders have a sharp focus on the quality of teaching and have formed effective partnerships with local schools which, together with relevant professional development, have resulted in improvements to teaching.
- Performance management targets for teachers are closely aligned to school improvement priorities. Teachers' performance is clearly linked to any salary increases.
- The primary school sports funding has been used effectively to develop competitive sports, to use coaches to develop expertise in teaching in physical education and to introduce new sports such as boxercise and hockey. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons and teachers enjoy developing their skills alongside the coaches. These are contributing well to pupils' healthy physical development and well-being.
- Leaders ensure that pupil premium funding is appropriately spent to provide support where it is needed for the small number of eligible pupils.
- The school welcomed the support and advice it received from the local authority, especially during the last academic year. This support has helped the school to return to an even keel.
- While the school has a focus on developing pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics, it also ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is well developed through a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes a range of exciting visits and visitors and after-school clubs and activities. The knitting club, for example, not only allows pupils to be creative but also provides a valuable opportunity for pupils to talk informally with adults about current affairs and issues which interest or worry them.
- An understanding of traditional British values is woven into the curriculum and also into the clubs and activities available to pupils.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet all current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well and keeps well informed about all aspects of school life and especially data about the performance of pupils and the quality of teaching. It uses this information to challenge leaders and to hold the school to account. Governors are familiar with teachers' standards and use them to help manage teachers' performance. They oversee the spending of the pupil premium and sport funding and are aware of the impact it is having on pupils' achievement and physical well-being. They bring a range of skills which they use to good effect and readily seek additional training to address any gaps. Governors are strategic in their approach and are ambitious for the school to improve. They give of their time willingly and support the school in all it does.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and has shown a marked improvement. The school's records show that incidents of unacceptable behaviour have reduced markedly. Pupils say that behaviour around the school,

in the playground, in the dinner hall and in lessons is good. Pupils typically work hard and try to do their best.

- On occasions, a very small number of older pupils can be silly. When this happens, there are clear procedures to make sure that any disruption is soon ended. Clear rules and a system of rewards and sanctions make sure that pupils know how to behave well.
- Pupils show respect for one another and are extremely polite to adults. They are eager to talk about their school. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as being peer listeners and assembly monitors and they take their duties seriously.
- The pupils develop social skills through the many opportunities to learn together in the classroom, school clubs and sporting activities. There is an active school council and the family service arrangements for dinner where pupils sit in mixed-age groups and are served by older pupils work very well in creating the family atmosphere in the small school.
- There have been no permanent exclusions and only one very short temporary exclusion in recent years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents are confident that their children are safe and happy at school and there are rigorous systems in place to ensure that this is the case with all adults offering highly effective and sensitive care to pupils.
- Pupils feel extremely safe and as one pupil said, 'I feel really safe here'. They are aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is rare and they are often able to solve problems between themselves. The restorative practice which is understood by all in the school and the trained peer listeners help to resolve disagreements. This contributes to a calm and harmonious atmosphere.
- Attendance is above average; there is no persistent absenteeism and pupils are punctual. This is because the school works hard to ensure that pupils and parents understand the benefits of regular attendance and pupils say that this is because they want to come to school as they feel very safe and enjoy their lessons, extra activities and visits.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable. It is typically good in early years and Key Stage 1 but teaching over time has been less strong in Key Stage 2 resulting in slower progress for these pupils. The new teacher is getting to know the pupils in the class and is starting to establish sound working relationships.
- There has been a determined effort to improve teaching in the recent past. There is now good teaching in most lessons and some is outstanding. However, teaching is not yet consistently good over time. Not all teachers use the information available about pupils' achievement to plan work that will allow pupils to make consistently good progress.
- Teachers mark work regularly but do not consistently apply the school's procedures for giving feedback or insist that pupils make the improvements suggested in a timely manner.
- Teachers plan lessons that interest the pupils. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects and, as a result, progress in writing while good, is not as rapid as it is in reading.
- The teaching of reading is improving throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to read at home at least five times a week and most say that they do. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and a good number asked for books for Christmas.
- The school has introduced plans to tackle weaknesses in pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and pupils practice their times tables regularly. However, pupils' progress is slowed because they do not have a firm grasp of the basic mathematical skills and knowledge that form the foundations for future learning. As a consequence, some pupils take too long to perform calculations and tend to make simple arithmetical mistakes.
- Teachers know their pupils' personal qualities and want the best for them but do not always have a clear understanding of what pupils might achieve. Good relationships are typical between pupils and the adults who work with them. As one pupil said, 'My teacher gives me all the help I need'.
- Teaching assistants know the pupils and their individual needs well and are skilled in providing support for those who need it, particularly those with special educational needs or disabilities.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Children typically join the school in the Reception Year with starting points that are often below and sometimes well below those expected for their age. They make good progress during their first year at school and this progress continues in Key Stage 1 where standards are rising and are above average, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils currently in Years 3 and 4 are also making good progress in reading and writing.
- However, the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 has been affected by a history of staffing changes and as a result, their progress is slower than pupils in other year groups. The school's records indicate that too few will make more than the progress expected of them, especially in writing and mathematics. Learning and progress have improved recently but there has been insufficient time for pupils to make up for all of the lost learning and make good progress overall.
- In reading, there has been a revision of the way pupils learn to link sounds and the letters they represent. In addition, the school has worked hard to encourage pupils to read regularly at home and as a result, progress in reading is good and standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Pupils write at increasing length and with greater accuracy in their literacy books. They are able to adjust their writing style to suit different audiences and purposes and when the subject interests them they write with imagination. However, they do not practise these skills in writing in other subjects.
- Progress in mathematics is hampered in Key Stage 2 because pupils do not have a firm enough grasp of their times tables and other basic mathematical knowledge and skills which form the foundation for further learning.
- The school supports the most able pupils well and as a result, they are on track to make good progress and achieve standards that are above average in reading and writing. Their standards in mathematics, while above average, are not as quite as high as in reading and writing.
- The progress of the very small number of pupils with special educational needs is good because they are accurately identified and supported effectively by staff who knows their needs well.
- There are too few pupils in the school to make meaningful comparisons between the achievement of those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding and those who are not, without identifying either group. Those pupils who are supported by the funding typically make similar progress to others in the school.

The early years provision is good

- Although numbers are very small and vary from year to year, children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are typically below and sometimes well below those typical for their age. They make good progress from their different starting points and an increasing proportion are ready for learning in Year 1.
- Early years is led by a determined leader who is well supported by a committed and equally effective team. Together they ensure that the provision runs smoothly and that children can flourish. She has a good understanding of the strengths of the provision and a clear idea of what can improve. As a result, early years has improved since the last inspection and the outside learning area, while not extensive, now provides a more stimulating environment.
- The teacher knows all the children's interests well and, as a result, is able to plan activities which enthuse the pupils. During the inspection, children eagerly seized the opportunity of snowy weather to play at road clearing despite the very low temperatures. Activities cover all the required areas of learning and as a result of the typically good and sometimes better teaching, children's achievement and their behaviour is good.
- Arrangements for children joining the early years are well thought out. Most children attend the play group which occupies the next door classroom and shares the outdoor space and so the move is usually trouble free. Children really benefit for learning with pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the same class. They quickly learn all the school routines and settle in very quickly.
- Safety is treated very seriously. There are well-thought-out systems for the start and end of the school day and staff are meticulous about making sure that children are safe at all times.

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	121324
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	449636

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	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Chapman
Headteacher	Sarah Atkinson
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2010
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