

Stanground St John's CofE Primary School

Chapel Street, Stanground, Peterborough, PE2 8JG

Inspection dates 15–16 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is improving because of the good leadership of the headteacher, her success in raising pupils' aspirations and attainment and the positive culture she has created.
- The school ensures pupils are safe and behave well and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. This is preparing pupils well for the next stage in their education
- Standards are rising at the end of Key Stage 2. The pupils who left Year 6 in 2014 made good progress in reading and mathematics from the levels they achieved at the end of Year 2. Most pupils currently in Key Stages 1 and 2 are achieving well.
- Pupils enjoy school life and they behave well. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds get on well together.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know the pupils well and have high expectations of them. As a result, pupils work hard and take pride in their work.
- Subject and senior leaders play a full part in promoting the school's values and in developing good practice in teaching. All adults in the school are proud of their involvement in its improvement.
- The Reception class provides children with a good start to their school lives. The activities provided for children helps them to make good progress. They are well prepared for the move to Year 1.
- The Trust has given high quality support since taking over responsibility for the school. It has helped the governing body improve the way it holds school leaders to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In 2014, only a few pupils made more than expected progress in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Marking does not always give pupils clear feedback on how they can improve their work. Teachers do not always check to make sure that pupils act on their comments and advice.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to write at length in the different subjects they study. This slows their progress in writing.
- At times, teachers are not quick enough to check how well pupils are learning in lessons and address their misconceptions.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 13 lessons taken from all the classes. Four of these visits were made jointly with the headteacher and another senior leader. Inspectors also visited small group 'catch-up' sessions held during the day. Inspectors reviewed the work in pupils' books, talked to them about their work and checked on their progress over time. An inspector heard some pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 read.
- The inspection team visited an assembly, and observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons as well as at the beginning of the school day, during playtimes and at lunch time. Inspectors also talked to the school council and two groups of pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, and teachers with specific responsibilities including for English, mathematics and the early years. Discussions took place with a director and another officer from the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust, representing the academy sponsors, and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspection team considered the 12 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and took into account a recent survey of parental opinion conducted by the school and the comments of a number of parents when they dropped their children off in the morning. The 30 completed staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation. This included: the school's self-evaluation and development plan; records of pupils' attainment, progress, behaviour and attendance; and systems for protecting and safeguarding pupils.

Inspection team

Frances Le Pla, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stanground St Johns CofE Primary School became an academy on 1st November 2013. It is sponsored by the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. However, there has been an increase in the number of pupils from Eastern Europe so that the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is now average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is above average. This funding is for pupils in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher joined the school at the beginning of January 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils who make more than the expected amount of progress, especially in writing, by making sure that teachers:
 - check more regularly how well pupils are learning during lessons, and modify the activities in line with pupils' understanding so that all are appropriately challenged
 - give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work, and check that all pupils have acted on this advice
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length and for different purposes in their English lessons and other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership and management are good; leaders are improving the quality of teaching and raising attainment. They have created a very positive atmosphere in which all pupils, including those whose circumstances make them most vulnerable, behave well and are keen to learn.
- The headteacher provides strong and focused leadership with high aspirations for pupils' achievement. She has created an effective senior team and together they provide good challenge and support for staff. All staff who responded to the questionnaire are very supportive of the work of the headteacher and her team to bring about further improvements. As one teacher put it: 'the school is a happy place and staff feel valued and appreciated.' There is good capacity for further improvement.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is good. There are effective systems in place for managing teachers' performance. Leaders are ready to take action where necessary to improve teaching and they set staff appropriate targets that are linked to improving pupils' progress.
- Subject leaders are new to their roles but are already helping senior leaders to check and improve teaching in the areas for which they are responsible. For example, in mathematics, the subject leader has introduced strategies for teachers to use to improve the way they help pupils develop their investigative skills.
- The school's self evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and identifies clearly what can be done to improve further. Plans for improvement build on current strengths. Staff make good use of data that show how well individual pupils are achieving. Senior leaders analyse information about pupils' progress carefully and use it to inform discussions with staff so that any underachievement can be rapidly addressed and extra help given to the pupils who need it.
- The school makes good use of training opportunities designed to develop teachers' professional skills. For example, teachers are encouraged to visit other schools to see good practice. Within the school, training for teachers and teaching assistants to develop their skills in teaching the links between letters and sounds (phonics) has been successful and has led to good progress in reading.
- The school is preparing well for the changes to the National Curriculum and statutory assessment. The academy trust has worked closely with the schools for which it is responsible to ensure clarity and accuracy in teachers' assessments.
- All pupils and groups of pupils enjoy the same good opportunities to succeed. The school uses its pupil premium funding well to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have spent the additional money mainly to increase the number of teaching assistants, to fund the learning mentor who supports the most vulnerable pupils, and to provide 'catch up' sessions for those who need it. The impact of these initiatives is evident in the good progress made by these pupils.
- The school makes good use of its primary physical education and sport premium to increase pupils' physical skills and expand the experiences available to them. It has used some of the money to employ a specialist physical education teacher who teaches all classes once a week. As a result, pupils enjoy learning new skills in sports such as cricket. The school has also used its funding to set up teams for sports such as football and extend the opportunities for sport outside lesson time.
- The range of subjects the school teaches is broad and balanced and promotes pupils' academic achievement and personal development well. It is enriched by music lessons for all pupils taught by a specialist music teacher, as well as by opportunities to learn French and Spanish, residential trips and a range of visitors. For example, the children in the Reception class enjoyed a visit from 'The Hindu Experience' and this helped them learn about other cultures.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are many

opportunities for pupils to reflect. For example, all pupils in the school were encouraged to think about what they wanted to be when they were adult and their ideas were displayed for all to see and think about on the 'Dare to Dream Tree' in the hall.

- The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain well. Leaders foster good relations and tackle discrimination by ensuring that pupils learn about the different beliefs and lifestyles of others and the need to respect them. In religious education lessons, pupils learn both about Christianity and about other religions such as Sikhism and Hinduism. Pupils learn about how people live in other parts of the world and they are proud of the money they have raised to help build a classroom in a school in Ghana. Pupils learn about democracy. During the inspection, in an assembly, the pupils learned about the leaders representing the main political parties in the forthcoming General Election. At the end of the assembly, pupils explored the question: 'What would it take to be the leader of Britain?'
- Leadership of the early years is good. This helps children to make good progress. The setting makes effective use of all its resources, including the outdoor area, to promote children's learning to the full.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding systems are very thorough and meet statutory requirements.
- The Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust has provided good support to the school since taking it over. Direct support by the trust and its consultants has contributed to improvements in teaching and pupils' attainment. The trust has given good support to the new headteacher, through funding induction days during the term before she arrived and providing a mentor. The trust knows the school well and checks on the school's progress through regular visits and the detailed scrutiny of performance information.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Since taking over the school, the trust has given good support to the governing body by appointing one of its officers as one of the governors. Supported and guided by the trust, and its officers, governors now provide good challenge and support for the school's leaders. They have carried out an assessment of their skills and are undertaking training to improve their ways of working. The governors are very enthusiastic and play a full part in the life of the school, for example the Chair and Vice Chair attend assemblies every week and other governors act as 'reading buddies' for pupils. They have a good grasp of the school's data showing how well pupils are doing. Governors check the work of the school through visits when they talk to pupils and teachers.
 - Governors and the trust are well informed about the quality of teaching and ensure that decisions about teachers' pay are appropriately linked to their performance and responsibilities. They know what is being done to tackle any underperformance.
 - The trust tracks finances well and supports leaders in deciding how additional funding, such as the pupil premium funding, should be spent.
 - Both the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust and the governing body have high aspirations for the school and together they are working well with leaders to bring about continued improvements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The high standard of behaviour expected of all pupils has a positive impact on their learning and progress. There is a very calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school. At the beginning of the day, pupils arrive promptly and quickly settle in their classrooms, getting out reading books or doing some work, ready to start learning. In lessons, pupils are attentive and focus well on their learning. They try hard and take care in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about lessons and other aspects of school life. They are clearly happy at school. They like their teachers and think they do a lot to help them in their learning. Pupils show respect for the learning environment. They do not drop litter.
- Pupils respond well to the opportunities they have to take on responsibility. These include the school council, being a librarian or a monitor. During the inspection, older pupils acted very responsibly when

setting up the hall for assembly and making sure the slides and the song were displayed properly so that everyone could see.

- Pupils are very polite and interested in other people. They work well together, help each other and show a very caring nature. Pupils are very supportive of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The school provides a great deal of support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Senior leaders and the learning mentor all spend a significant amount of time working with pupils, their families and outside agencies. This enables the very few pupils with significant behavioural difficulties to make good improvements in their behaviour.
- The attendance rate is average and is improving. All absences are followed up through well-established procedures.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders give high priority to the safeguarding of the pupils in their care, both in school and when on school visits.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and the vast majority of parents spoken to, or who expressed a view through Parent View or the school's recent survey, confirm this view. The school provides a good range of activities to help pupils learn to stay safe. For example, children in the Reception class use a 'Zebra crossing' set up in the outside learning area to learn how to cross the road safely. Pupils are taught how to use the internet and computers safely.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare, and that if it occurred it would be dealt with effectively. Pupils have a clear understanding of different types of bullying, such as bullying on the internet and racially prejudiced bullying. Lessons in personal, social and health education provide good opportunities for pupils to tackle issues about bullying. The views of all pupils are valued and nurtured, so all feel special.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils' work, the school's assessment data and inspectors' evaluations of teaching and observations of pupils' learning, all indicate that the quality of teaching is good. Good teaching is enabling current pupils to make good progress and is leading to rising standards.
- Classrooms are attractive and well organised. Teachers use displays well both in classrooms and around the school, to celebrate pupils' achievement and stimulate their learning. Teachers know the pupils well and have positive relationships with them. They have high expectations of their classes and are committed to raising pupils' aspirations and self-confidence so that they believe they can achieve well. As a result, pupils usually work hard and take a pride in their work.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are able to explain clearly what they want the pupils to learn. As a result, pupils are able to start quickly on the activities they have been set because they know what they need to do. In a physical education lesson, for example, a skilful and well-presented demonstration by the teacher led to pupils making good progress in their throwing and catching skills.
- Teachers make good use of teaching assistants, and additional staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Targeted support by assistants often helps disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to concentrate as well as to make progress. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and to probe their learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson, older pupils were asked: 'to tell me what you already know about angles and how might that help?' As a result, they were able to use their own knowledge to find missing angles in shapes.
- The teaching of reading is good and all teachers place strong emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained in the teaching of phonics (how the sounds in words are represented by different letters). Reading sessions are planned thoroughly and staff match

work well to the next steps different groups need to make in their learning. Those who need extra help with their reading receive support in small groups. Teachers encourage pupils to read often and pupils of all ages enjoy the challenge to read as many books as they can so they can win a certificate or even a book.

- The teaching of mathematics is good and teachers encourage pupils to use their knowledge to solve mathematical problems, for example, using addition and subtraction skills to find a missing number in number sentence.
- Support for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to plan support for these pupils and to encourage them to improve their vocabulary by talking about what they have learned.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and often praise them for what they have achieved. However, the comments do not always give pupils enough guidance about what they need to work on next to make faster progress. Where pupils are given additional challenges and 'next steps' to work on, teachers do not always ensure that they have been acted on.
- In some lessons, teachers wait too long before checking that pupils are successfully completing the tasks they have been set. As a result some pupils' misunderstandings are not picked up quickly enough and this slows the progress they make.
- Teachers encourage pupils to write regularly and provide interesting and topical themes for them to write about, for example, a letter to the council to persuade them not to close the local library. In the Reception class, teachers take every opportunity they can to encourage children to write in the different activities they do, and this helps them make good progress. However, in other year groups, teachers do not create enough opportunities to develop and extend pupils' writing skills in the different subjects they are studying. This limits improvement in the content, breadth and style of pupils' writing.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Since the school opened as an academy, senior leaders and the academy trust have taken firm action to raise achievement and identify areas where pupils could make faster progress. Pupils' books and the school's own data show that most pupils currently in the school are making at least the expected amount of progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and standards are rising. In 2014, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level in reading writing and mathematics was close to the national average.
- Some children join the Reception class with attainment that is broadly typical for their age but many have weak skills in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics. Children achieved well to attain average standards by the end of the Reception year in 2014. Children currently in the Reception class are also making good progress.
- Results in reading are improving. In the Reception class and at Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in learning about the sounds that letters make (phonics). Pupils at Key Stage 1 who read to an inspector, had developed good skills for tackling new words and showed a clear understanding of the story. In 2014, results in the Year 1 screening of phonics were just below average.
- Standards in reading were broadly average at the end of Year 2, indicating that pupils made steady progress at Key Stage 1. Standards were also average at the end of Year 6, where the proportion of pupils who made expected and better than expected progress was in line with schools nationally. Pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading.
- In 2014, standards at the end of Year 2 were broadly average in mathematics. In Year 6, the proportion of pupils who gained a Level 4 was above average but it was below average for the higher Level 5. The proportion of pupils who made expected and better than expected progress was in line with schools nationally. Across the school, pupils are currently making good progress in mathematics. The school's

increased emphasis on problem-solving activities is helping pupils to get better at applying their mathematical skills to solve tricky questions.

- In 2014, standards in writing were below average at the end of Year 2 but this represents steady progress across the key stage from pupils' very low starting points at the end of the Reception year. At the end of Year 6, attainment in writing was broadly average. The proportion of pupils who made the expected amount of progress at Key Stage 2 was similar to that seen nationally, while the proportion that made better than expected progress was lower.
- The school is already taking action to raise achievement in writing and there is an increased focus on grammar, punctuation and spelling to improve pupils' accuracy in writing. In the Reception class, children have good opportunities to make marks, form their letters and write for a purpose. The more able children in the Reception class are able to produce several sentences of writing without support. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress and the school's data indicates that standards are on track to rise this year. By the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6, many are increasingly able to write for different audiences, at least in the work they do in English lessons. However, they do not write as frequently as they should in other subjects and their written work here is not always as fluent or of the same quality. School data suggest that, overall, most pupils are currently making expected progress in writing, and the number making good progress is rising.
- Disadvantaged pupils did as well as their classmates at the end of Year 2 in 2014. At the end of Year 6, they were a year ahead of their classmates in reading, a term ahead in writing, half a term ahead in English grammar, punctuation and spelling and did as well as their school peers in mathematics. They made similar progress to the rest of their class in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were almost a term ahead in reading, half a term behind in writing and one and a half terms behind in mathematics. They made better progress than pupils nationally in reading, similar progress in writing and slightly less progress in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making similar progress to their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because of the good quality support they receive. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are making similar progress to other groups.
- The most-able children are making good progress in the Reception class but their progress is not as good elsewhere in the school. In Key Stage 1 the most-able pupils make steady progress but in 2014 very few reached the higher levels in reading writing and mathematics. Similarly in 2014, the proportion of Year 6 pupils gaining a Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics was below average, with no pupils gaining a Level 6 in any subject. The school is taking action to raise the achievement of its most-able pupils. Current data indicate that this year, for the first time since the academy opened, a few pupils are on track to achieve a Level 6 in mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- Children settle into school life and quickly become used to the school's routines. Children start the day happily and productively, for example writing their name on a label for their fruit or choosing a book to look at. They enjoy sharing their learning with adults. During the inspection for example, they talked about how they were selling cakes in the 'cake shop' that had been set up. They make good progress from their different starting points and are well-prepared for moving up into Key Stage 1.
- Children are kept very safe. They behave well and work and play cooperatively, happily taking turns and sharing. They are confident, enjoy school and the activities provided for them, especially outdoors and in their role play area.
- Staff make good use of the accommodation by providing exciting activities in all the different activity areas and this enables children to learn well in all the required areas of learning. The outdoor area is used effectively to extend children's learning, both through adult-led activities and those that children

choose for themselves. During the inspection, the children were enthralled by a pond dipping activity when they caught tadpoles and other 'mini beasts'. This exciting activity led to children using their good phonics knowledge to write sentences about the creatures they had found.

- Teaching is good. Assessment is detailed and systematic. Teachers use their assessments well to plan the next steps in children's learning. All adults are involved in observing and recording children's progress. Parents are regularly informed about children's progress and they are invited to record their comments in the children's records of learning. Parents are also kept aware of what their children are learning so they can help them at home.

- All children, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. This is due to the good leadership and management of the early years provision. There are good systems in place for assessing what children can already do when they join the school including discussions with the teachers at the pre-schools that the children attend. Well-timed home visits, which take place soon after the children have started school, enable children to show what they can do in a familiar setting with adults from school that they have already met.

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	140031
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	450255

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jackie Jenkins
Headteacher	Sally Williams
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01733 703257
Fax number	01733 703225
Email address	office@stanground-st-johns.peterborough.sch.uk

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