

# Stokesay Primary School

Market Street, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 9NW

## Inspection dates

19–20 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but is not yet consistently good. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress they should in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some pupils, especially the most able, are not challenged sufficiently and therefore do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their writing skills in longer pieces of writing.
- The quality of teaching and learning in early years is not consistently good. Some parts of the indoor and outdoor environments do not support children's learning. This limits some learning. The leadership of early years is at an early stage of development.
- Teachers do not always provide some pupils, especially the most able, with reading books which match their abilities. Phonics teaching is inconsistent across early years and key stage 1. Consequently, some pupils do not make the progress they should in reading.
- The leadership of special educational needs is new and is, therefore, yet to be fully effective in developing the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, it is not planned well enough to develop pupils' learning fully or provide them with a range of opportunities to apply their mathematical and writing skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

### The school has the following strengths

- The academy trust provides highly effective support to the school. As a result, considerable improvements have been made across the school, especially in the development of leadership and management.
- The headteacher is highly ambitious and has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. He, along with his senior leaders, are effectively driving more rapid improvements across the school.
- Governors understand the school's performance very well and therefore hold leaders to account robustly.
- All staff ensure that pupils' welfare and safety are of the highest priority. Pupils are polite and respectful and behave well around school and in lessons. Attendance has improved.
- Pupils' understanding of British values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are exceptionally well developed.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in reading, phonics, writing and mathematics by ensuring that teachers consistently:
  - raise expectations and the level of challenge for all groups of pupils, especially the most able
  - plan work that meets the needs of pupils, especially the most able, to enable them to make rapid progress and achieve the levels of which they are capable
  - provide pupils with more opportunities to write at length, and in a range of different styles
  - carefully match reading books to pupils' abilities, especially the most able
  - provide high-quality phonics teaching for all groups of pupils
  - plan work that builds securely and progressively on previous learning in all subjects.
- Further improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the curriculum is planned to provide pupils with more opportunities to apply their writing and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics
  - support and training are provided for the new leadership of special educational needs.
- Improve the provision in early years by:
  - ensuring that the indoor and outdoor environments meet the learning needs of the children
  - developing the quality of teaching and learning across the early years foundation stage to ensure that children, especially the most able, make the progress of which they are capable
  - providing effective support to further develop the leadership of early years.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the school converted to an academy, there have been many staffing changes, including the appointment of a new headteacher. The headteacher has managed these changes well and has created a cohesive staff team, where all members feel valued and supported.
- The headteacher is highly ambitious for the school. He has embraced all available support and his openness to support, coupled with a determined drive to improve outcomes for all pupils, are enabling rapid improvements to be made. However, there has not been sufficient time since his appointment to show the full impact of these improvements.
- The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Detailed development priorities have specific actions to improve outcomes across the school. These priorities and actions are regularly evaluated to ensure that they are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Consequently, significant improvements have been made to the quality of teaching and learning and leadership and management over the last two years.
- The headteacher's commitment to developing a wider leadership team has paid great dividends. Senior leaders receive effective support and training that enable them to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school, especially in English and mathematics, and ensure that staff receive the right support to help them improve their practice. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is beginning to improve pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher uses appraisal systems well to raise the quality of teaching and learning and to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. Teachers' development needs are carefully evaluated and then support and training are provided to help them improve their practice. The headteacher recognises where this needs to be further developed.
- The additional funding received to support disadvantaged pupils is put to good use in a variety of ways. The family support worker provides help and support to vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils receive additional interventions to help them to make better progress. As a result of the effective use of this funding, disadvantaged pupils are making better progress, and progress in line with their peers.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used to develop teachers' expertise in teaching PE through the use of specialist coaches. Through a partnership with a high school, pupils have access to a range of sporting competitions. The range of sports clubs available to pupils has been widened. Consequently, pupils' achievement in competitions has risen, as has their participation in sporting clubs. A teacher is trained to run 'forest school' sessions, which engages pupils in more active learning.

- Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are exceptionally well developed. Pupils have many opportunities through assemblies and the curriculum to learn about different faiths and cultures, for which they show a high level of respect and tolerance. Pupils say that it is absolutely fine to be different in their school. Pupils are involved in preparing reports for Parliament through the Pupils 2 Parliament scheme, sharing their views on topics such as 'should sugary drinks be taxed?' Reflection books and the 'prayer space' provide pupils with time to share their thoughts, feelings and concerns about world events, such as the recent hurricanes. Pupils, therefore, are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school joined the academy trust in 2015. The trust provides high-quality support to the school and leaders across the trust work within a strong partnership. Teachers and leaders have the opportunity to share good practice with one another. There is a deep culture of mutual trust and respect and a keen and accurate focus on school improvement. While teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes are not yet consistently good across the school, rapid improvements are being made in these areas through the work of leaders and the support of the trust.
- The school's curriculum is both broad and balanced. It is enriched with trips and visits and activities such as the 'seaside day' to enhance learning. However, pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to apply their writing and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable across the curriculum.
- Leaders use the funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. Additional interventions provide these pupils with targeted support. Leaders work with a range of outside agencies to support their specific needs. Improved teaching and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are leading to these pupils making better progress. Some funding is used to support the leadership of special educational needs through the academy trust. However, this leadership is new to the school and is at an early stage of development. Leaders recognise this and appropriate training and support are being provided to develop this aspect of leadership. It is too early to evaluate the impact this leadership.

## **Governance of the school**

- Since the school joined the academy trust, governance has strengthened significantly. Governors have embraced the support of the trust and have taken advantage of a range of training opportunities. Governors now have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They challenge leaders robustly to ensure that actions to improve the school's performance are working.
- Governors have a detailed understanding of all aspects of the school's work, including how additional funding is used. They check carefully to see whether the use of funds is helping to improve pupils' outcomes.
  
- Governors understand their statutory responsibilities and make sure that all

safeguarding procedures are adhered to, ensuring that pupils' safety and well-being are of paramount importance to everyone in the school. The governing body has a good range of relevant skills and expertise to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding policies and procedures are detailed and robust. They go to great lengths to ensure that all staff fully understand these procedures and know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil. All staff have pupils' safety and welfare as the highest priority. Leaders act on any concerns raised swiftly and do not rest until they feel that the right support is in place to protect pupils. All parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, said that their children are safe in school.
- Leaders make detailed checks on all adults who work in the school. When new staff are appointed, procedures to recruit them safely are followed carefully. Risk assessments are detailed, with measures to mitigate risks clearly set out. All staff receive regular training, including updates when needed. These measures ensure that all pupils are kept safe in school.
- Pupils have a range of opportunities to learn about how to keep themselves safe. E-safety is taught through the curriculum, and pupils of all ages are able to explain how they can use computers safely, including when using the internet. Pupils take part in road safety lessons and can also receive training in cycling safely on the roads.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is not yet consistently good across all year groups and subjects. There have been significant changes in staffing over the last two years, which has led to some instability in teaching. In addition to this, there has also been some historical weak teaching. This has resulted in some pupils not making the progress of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics.
  - Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is especially so for the most able pupils. These pupils are not challenged sufficiently and therefore do not make the progress or achieve the standards of which they are capable.
  - Teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop their writing skills through longer pieces of writing and in other subjects. Some tasks limit the amount pupils can write and do not enable them to extend their learning. Some writing tasks focus on work which pupils have already shown that they can complete with ease. Overall, this limits pupils' progress, especially that of the most able.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistently good across key stage 1. In addition to this,

some teachers do not match reading books carefully enough to pupils' abilities. Some most-able pupils are limited in their choice of reading material. As a result, some pupils do not make enough progress in reading.

- In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers do not pay enough attention to what pupils have already learned and understood. Planning in these subjects does not build on what pupils know, understand and can already do. In addition to this, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. Pupils, therefore, are not sufficiently challenged and their progress in these subjects is limited.
- Leaders, including the leaders of English and mathematics, are providing effective support to develop the skills and expertise of teachers. This includes sharing good practice across the academy trust. This support is leading to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics.
- Some teachers demonstrate very strong subject knowledge, especially in grammar and mathematics. They use questioning effectively to probe pupils' thinking and to take their learning forward. These teachers support pupils to think for themselves and challenge them to reach a higher level of learning. This helps pupils to make more rapid progress.
- Teaching assistants generally contribute effectively to pupils' learning. They support and develop pupils' learning without providing too much help. They encourage pupils to try and work things out for themselves.
- All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff encourage pupils to work hard. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons and want to achieve well. In all classes, a very positive learning environment is evident.
- Specialist teachers are used to teach PE, music and French. This teaching is enabling pupils to make good progress in these subjects and is helping to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils say that the homework they receive supports their learning. They are very clear about the expectations of the homework and can explain articulately why it helps them.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good and is a particular strength of the school.
- Pupils of all ages are confident and self-assured because teachers help them to believe in themselves. Pupils receive encouragement in all that they do, and teachers make time to listen to any problems or concerns they may have. Pupils speak highly about the support they receive from all adults in school. The family support worker also helps families who need additional support.
- Pupils show great care for one another. 'Break buddies' are on hand to support anyone who may feel lonely at playtimes. Older pupils mentor key stage 1 pupils and early

years children to help them engage in positive play.

- Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities, including taking part in the school council and as librarians. The school council is responsible for organising events to raise money for charities, and also takes the lead in deciding which charities should be supported.
- Pupils have an exceptionally good understanding of what bullying is and what to do if it happens. They know that bullying should not be tolerated under any circumstances. They say, 'It is not anti-bullying week, it is anti-bullying year!' They also say that bullying is very rare in school, and that teachers deal with it swiftly if it does happen.
- Pupils value the breakfast club and the positive start it gives them to the day. Pupils also talk enthusiastically about the homework club and the support it provides for them. The range of clubs are well attended, including those for netball, football and art.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and show a very high level of respect towards one another and all adults. At playtimes, pupils take time to help each other and play cooperatively together. Inappropriate behaviour is rare across the school. Behaviour in lessons is extremely positive, with pupils showing an eagerness to learn. Leaders keep detailed records of any poor behaviour and ensure that appropriate action is taken when it does happen, including providing additional support to help some pupils manage their own behaviour.
- Pupils understand the behaviour sanctions and rewards very well. They look forward to receiving rewards for positive behaviour and value the assemblies where their achievements are celebrated.
- Attendance improved over the last year and is now in line with national averages. The persistent absence rates also dropped significantly last year. This is as a result of the effective actions leaders are taking to address attendance issues. Leaders identify where there are concerns and then work with families to address and improve the attendance of pupils where necessary. An education welfare officer works with the school to help address any issues.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- In 2016, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 was significantly below national averages in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing at the end of key stage 2 was in line with national data. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below national averages and no pupils gained the higher levels in these subjects in 2016.
- However, at the end of key stage 1 in 2016, outcomes were in line with or above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of pupils achieving the greater depth of learning was also broadly in line with national averages

in reading, writing and mathematics.

- While information for 2017 is yet to be confirmed, pupils performed better at the end of key stage 2 than in 2016 in reading and mathematics. However, outcomes at the end of key stage 1 declined.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 have been in line with or above national averages for the last two years.
- While there are relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, these pupils are making the progress expected of them. Where individuals need additional support, interventions are in place to help take their learning forward.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive support and interventions to help them make better progress. In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils made average progress in reading and writing, but below average progress in mathematics. At the end of key stage 1 in 2016, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were average.
- The school's own assessment information for pupils in all year groups shows that pupils are currently making inconsistent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Owing to historical weak teaching and some remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, pupils in some year groups have not made the progress of which they are capable.
- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils do not make as much progress as they should in subjects other than English and mathematics. This is because teachers do not consistently plan work that builds on pupils' prior learning. Expectations, especially of the most able, are not high enough, and this limits progress.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- The early years leader has a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision. Plans are in place to improve the provision, including the leadership and management and teaching and learning, but these developments are still at an early stage. The organisation of the early years classes has only recently been changed, and all areas are not fully resourced. Consequently, the early years provision is not meeting children's needs fully.
- Children enter early years with skills and abilities below those typically expected for their age. Over the last two years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been in line with national averages. This represents good progress. However, currently some children are not making the progress of which they are capable because the provision is not meeting their needs.
- Teaching and learning across the early years classes are not consistently good. In some areas, staff do not provide children with stimulating activities which are matched to their learning needs. The indoor and outdoor environments are not used effectively to promote purposeful learning through play. Some children do not have enough



opportunities to explore their learning in a variety of ways.

- Some staff do not assess children's learning accurately and therefore do not take children's learning forward quickly enough. This is limiting the progress of some children, especially the most able, and is not preparing them well enough for their move to key stage 1.
- Some staff do not manage children's behaviour effectively. This results in some children not participating in learning. Occasionally, this can disrupt the learning of other children.
- The majority of children show a good level of independence, especially in the Nursery class. Even at this early stage of the year, children interact confidently with adults and other children.
- Where teaching is stronger, staff encourage and support children to make choices for themselves, use skilful questioning to assess what children know and then use this information to take learning forward. Exciting activities are carefully matched to children's learning needs. Where this happens, children make more rapid progress in their learning.
- The school works closely with parents to support children's learning. Parents are encouraged to contribute to children's 'learning journey' records by completing 'wow' moments that their children achieve, showing what they can do at home. Parents are invited into school to share their children's learning and to find out how they are taught.
- Before children start school, staff ensure that parents are provided with a range of information to help their children settle into school quickly. Parents and children are invited in for open days to familiarise the children with the early years classrooms. This helps children settle quickly into school life.
- The school works with a range of agencies, such as speech and language therapists, to support children who have specific needs. All adults are vigilant about ensuring that children are kept safe. They show a deep understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures and apply them consistently. All early years safeguarding and welfare requirements are met and therefore safeguarding is effective.
- There are very few disadvantaged children and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the early years; comments on their progress are withheld in the interests of confidentiality. However, the additional funding received to support these children is used effectively.

## School details

Unique reference number	141340
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10037087

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Elizabeth Storey
Headteacher	David Peterson
Telephone number	01588 672275
Website	<a href="http://www.stokesay.shropshire.sch.uk">www.stokesay.shropshire.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@stokesay.shropshire.sch.uk">admin@stokesay.shropshire.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school became part of the South Shropshire Academy Trust in 2015.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Stokesay Primary School is smaller than the average-sized school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is

above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

- The school runs a breakfast club for the pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with pupils, heard a selection of pupils read and observed pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the leader of provision for special educational needs, the early years leader and senior leaders with subject responsibilities. She met with members of the local governing body and spoke to a representative of the academy trust.
- A range of pupils' books from all year groups and a range of subjects were looked at.
- A number of documents were considered, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. The inspector also considered information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- The inspector took account of 21 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. She spoke to parents before school. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector reviewed 22 responses to an inspection questionnaire returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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