

Stonesfield School

High Street, Stonesfield, Witney OX29 8PU

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Stonesfield is a happy and welcoming school. The headteacher has generated a good team spirit among staff. She is well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development and is determined to bring about the necessary improvements.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school. They have improved several key areas of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and well trained. They work closely with teachers and give effective extra support to pupils.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are helped to make at least similar progress to their classmates.
- The governing body provides clear strategic guidance through strong support and effective challenge to senior leaders. Governors visit regularly to find out for themselves how the school is performing.
- Pupils enjoy the broad curriculum, which is enhanced by a wide range of trips, clubs and other events.
- Pupils behave well. They like school and feel valued. Most parents speak very positively about the school.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure. Staff are vigilant and very aware of their responsibilities to keep children safe.
- There is strong leadership in the early years. The environment is well organised and caring. Teaching is effective. Children quickly settle in and make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Teachers build upon pupils' earlier learning effectively and manage their classes well. However, the work for the most able pupils is sometimes not demanding enough.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and writing. Outcomes in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have been weaker in the recent past, but are improving.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers challenge pupils with appropriately demanding work, especially most-able pupils.
- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics by ensuring that teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to reason and solve problems.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is ambitious and determined, with a clear vision for the future of the school, which is shared by staff and governors. She has created a welcoming and friendly school where staff morale is high and pupils are happy and hard-working.
- Senior leaders reacted promptly and effectively to bring about the improvements recommended in the previous inspection. For example, pupils' progress in writing has improved and the quality of teaching is at least good. Senior leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas where improvements should be made. The well-considered school development plan addresses effectively the areas for improvement.
- Senior leaders and governors recognised that pupils' progress was weaker in mathematics in 2016 and immediately reorganised the teaching programme for mathematics. They made good use of support from the local authority to train staff further in teaching mathematics and in leadership skills. Consequently, pupils are now making good progress in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress is monitored closely by class teachers, together with the headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). Pupils in danger of falling behind are given well-targeted support so that they catch up quickly. A wide range of strategies are used successfully to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Senior leaders check the impact of planned support to ensure that it is really making a difference.
- The headteacher follows a robust programme to check on the quality of teaching. A wide range of evidence, including checks on the progress pupils are making, ensures that evaluations of teachers' skills and their impact on learning are accurate. Underperformance in teaching is addressed robustly. Where teaching is not good enough, appropriate support, such as coaching and bespoke training, is provided. As a consequence, the quality of teaching has improved.
- There is an effective training programme for all teachers and teaching assistants, linked to the school development plan and to individual needs. The SENCo is used effectively to monitor, manage and support teaching assistants in their roles. Teaching assistants are skilled and effective in their roles, and are a valuable asset in supporting pupils' learning.
- The school offers a good range and balance of subjects. A suitable amount of time is devoted to English and mathematics. Elements of other subjects are presented in the form of exciting topics, such as 'Romans' and 'Dungeons and dragons', which engage pupils' interest well. The curriculum is well enhanced by a wide range of clubs and other activities, particularly around music and art.
- The forest school is well established. Reception children and Year 1 pupils really enjoy learning about the natural world and develop self-confidence and independence. In addition, pupils benefit from high-quality sports coaching from specialists and a wide range of sporting activities, including competitive sports.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted strongly and

contributes to the very positive ethos of the school. Pupils understand and follow the school's six values, including respect, honesty and kindness. They are being well prepared to become responsible citizens. Senior leaders ensure that all pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and aspects of school life. For example, they make sure disadvantaged pupils enjoy the same opportunities and have access to the same experiences as their schoolmates.

- Senior leaders strive to engage parents, for example inviting them to celebration events and to see the work pupils have done at the end of each topic. Parents have good opportunities to learn about the way teachers teach and how parents can help their own children at home. The vast majority of parents expressed very positive views about the school. Several parents were particularly pleased about how happy their children were in school and how well their confidence had grown.

Governance of the school

- The governing body offers strong support to the school and holds senior leaders to account for the impact of their work. Governors are passionate about their roles and are ambitious for the school. Between them, they have a wide range of relevant skills and experience. Their skills have been further enhanced with suitable training.
- Governors know the school well. They receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher, but also make regular focused visits to check the school's performance for themselves.
- Governors are well aware of their responsibilities. They ensure that the school's finances are used prudently, particularly that staff pay awards are well deserved. The use of extra funding, such as the pupil premium and the physical education and sport funding, is monitored closely to make sure that it is used effectively to benefit pupils.

Safeguarding

- Senior leaders, governors and staff keep the safeguarding of children as their top priority. Governors make regular checks on safeguarding arrangements at the school to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
- Staff value pupils and listen to them. Pupils are confident that teachers care for them and that they can talk to them if they are ever worried. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding. They know they need to be vigilant for signs that pupils may be at risk and that they must report any concerns immediately.
- The headteacher, as the designated safeguarding lead, knows how to get advice and how to report safeguarding concerns appropriately. She is tenacious in ensuring that reported concerns are acted on quickly and effectively. She maintains comprehensive safeguarding records, which are stored securely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have established good and warm relationships with their pupils, and manage their groups well. Teaching is lively and enthusiastic and engages pupils well. Pupils enjoy the activities planned for them. Teachers have high expectations of pupils'

behaviour and the quality of their work.

- Teaching staff are well trained. They attend external training courses matched to the school's development plan and their own needs. They also benefit from working with local schools to share expertise and compare methods for checking on the quality of pupils' work.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed. They work closely with teachers to ensure that the support they give to pupils is effective and well matched to pupils' needs. Extra help for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is particularly effective, for example in improving pupils' reading ability.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They give clear explanations and often model what they expect from pupils. Teachers provide guidance on what good work looks like. For example, in writing exercises, pupils have helpful success criteria against which they can evaluate their own work. Teachers question pupils skilfully to make them explain their ideas and think more deeply. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to describe convincingly the strategies they were developing to solve a frequency problem in mathematics.
- Most parents commented very positively about how effective teaching is. Many stressed how helpful and approachable teachers were.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly, in line with the school's assessment policy. They plan interesting tasks to build upon pupils' earlier learning. Activities are often challenging, but sometimes pupils spend too long on work that is too easy for them. In addition, they have too few opportunities for reasoning and problem solving in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show great confidence. Several parents commented on how much more self-assured their children were since joining the school. Pupils know that their teachers listen to them and care about them. They feel valued. They speak confidently and articulately about their work and when answering questions. For example, over lunch, one Year 2 pupil volunteered that he enjoyed school and was 'obsessive about history'.
- Pupils feel safe and secure at school. They always feel they have a teacher they can turn to if they are ever worried or upset. They have learned how to stay safe. For example, Year 6 pupils have considered ways to stay safe online, and, with the help of fire officers, have practised resuscitation techniques and ways of escaping fires.
- Pupils know about bullying and what to do if they see or experience it. Pupils say bullying is rare and that they are confident that their teachers will sort out any incidents quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and courteous and show consideration for one another as they move around the school and at playtimes. In the dining hall, they are well-mannered and sociable.
- Pupils understand how to behave in class. They know the school's five golden rules and listen to their teachers. They settle to work quickly and generally persevere with activities. They collaborate well, sharing ideas and resources sensibly.
- School information about behaviour is detailed. It shows that there are few incidents of serious misbehaviour, and that the number of incidents of misbehaviour has fallen over the last three years. Parents and pupils agree that behaviour at the school is good.
- Pupils like school and attend regularly. However, attendance dropped below the national average last year, mainly due to illness. Senior leaders strive to reduce absence, for example stressing the importance of regular attendance in assemblies and newsletters. As a consequence, current attendance is above average and higher than the same period last year.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make strong progress in reading and writing. Their progress in mathematics has greatly improved since the dip in the performance of Year 6 pupils in 2016. The quality of work of current pupils in all year groups shows that they are making good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The very small numbers of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities in each year group receive effective help and support. As a result, they make similar or better progress than their schoolmates.
- In 2017, the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. Year 6 pupils made better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than in the previous year, though in mathematics, it was still lower than average.
- Pupils have good opportunities to practise their writing skills in English and in their topic work. For most pupils, their handwriting skills develop well. By Year 6, pupils are able to organise text effectively and write for a variety of purposes.
- Pupils reported that they enjoy reading and do so regularly. Reading has a high profile in school. Several events, such as Roald Dahl day, promote pupils' reading well. During the inspection, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils were looking forward to 'book at bedtime', an evening at school listening to stories in their pyjamas with their parents.
- Pupils in key stage 1 demonstrate good skills in phonics. The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been above the national average for the last four years.
- In mathematics, pupils take pride in their work, presenting it well and completing their work fully. Generally, they develop good fluency, remembering number facts and methods of calculation well through regular practice. However, they have fewer opportunities to apply their skills to solve problems or to develop their ability to reason.
- Although pupils are often offered a choice of challenging work to do, activities for the most able pupils are sometimes too easy. As a result, they do not make as much

progress as they might.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years department is well led and managed. Careful planning by the department leader ensures good provision for both Reception children and Year 1 pupils in the mixed-year class. As a result, children get off to a good start in Reception.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been above the national average for the last few years.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are enthusiastic and always praise children's good behaviour, encouraging them to get along companionably with one another. Adults show great care and concern for children. For example, they handle occasional misbehaviour very well so that learning is not disrupted.
- Adults have high expectations of children. They constantly engage children in conversation and question them skilfully so that children think more deeply about what they are doing.
- Phonics teaching is strong and children quickly develop strategies to recognise and pronounce letters and words. Teachers show children how to produce the correct sounds, using engaging tasks that keep children practising them.
- Children behave well and listen to their teachers. They settle into school routines quickly and grow in confidence, learning to do things for themselves, such as collecting the resources they need. They usually persevere with activities they have chosen.
- Adults make regular observations of children's progress and tailor future activities to each child's next steps in learning. Children's development is clearly recorded and shared with parents, who also have opportunities to contribute their own observations.
- The Reception environment, inside and outside, is well organised with a good range of activities, and covering all areas of learning. Staff are suitably trained in first aid and safeguarding. They show great care for the children in their charge.

School details

Unique reference number	123022
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10037823

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs	Sandy Hayes and Gillian Clarke
Headteacher	Fi McGregor
Telephone number	01993 891 687
Website	www.stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 January 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are five classes, including a full-time Reception class and one Year 6 class.
- Most pupils come from a White British background, with a few pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion that have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- In 2017, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and a group of teachers. He met with the chair of governors and two other governors. He spoke to the headteacher of another local school in her role as a representative of the local authority. He also spoke to governors and staff about their understanding of safeguarding procedures.
- Together with the headteacher, the inspector observed learning in all year groups, including Year 1 pupils in the forest school in the school grounds. He looked at samples of pupils' work in books across all year groups.
- The inspector spoke to a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils during a formal meeting and spoke informally with pupils during lessons, at breaktimes and while dining. He listened to several Year 2 pupils read.
- A range of documentation was considered, including: the school development plan; the self-evaluation report; records of monitoring of teaching and learning; governing body minutes and records of governors' visits; and information about pupils' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour. The inspector scrutinised records concerning safeguarding and toured the school site.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day. He analysed 33 responses and 26 free-text comments submitted to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, during the inspection.

Inspection team

James McVeigh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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