

Stiperstones CofE Primary School

Snailbeach, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY5 0LZ

Inspection dates

27–28 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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

- The acting executive headteacher, ably supported by the teacher-in-charge, provides clear, energetic and visionary leadership for the school.
- Governors, with support from the local authority and interim leaders, have carefully managed a turbulent time of staff change and improved stability and provision for pupils.
- The school has an interim leadership structure. Governors are consulting parents to ensure that a sustainable leadership structure is in place.
- The local authority has monitored all aspects of school life rigorously since 2017. Leaders in school are now in a position to monitor teaching and learning.
- Good teaching in all classes enables all pupils to achieve well from their starting points. However, not all pupils with gaps in spelling and basic number skills, particularly in key stage 1, have fully caught up.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well catered for. Additional adults provide good levels of support for pupils.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are very keen to learn. They feel safe and know how to stay safe.
- Pupils are extremely well behaved. Their personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Pupils display exemplary values of kindness, respect and care for each other.
- The pupil premium is used effectively, resulting in pupils making good progress.
- Educational visits locally and to places like Normandy enhance and bring the school's stimulating, broad curriculum to life. Learning is memorable and exciting.
- Parents are very positive about the school and the quality of communication with staff.
- Pupils in school participate in a wide range of sporting activities. However, governors' planning for this aspect of funding has lacked focus.
- In the early years, children get off to a good start and are making good progress. However, the outdoor play and learning space is underused. It is not as inviting or interesting as it could be.
- Teacher assessment judgements across the school in all classes are accurate. However, in the early years, systems to track the progress are not always providing adults with precise information in the different areas of learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Governors should ensure that:
 - substantive and sustainable leadership is in place
 - statutory requirements for the publication of information on the PE and sport premium on the school's website are met.
- Leaders and managers should continue to embed improvements in teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - historical gaps in learning are addressed to enable pupils to learn to spell well and to access reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics.
- Leaders and managers should further improve outcomes for children in the early years by ensuring that:
 - the information about what children can do and need to do next is accurately recorded and informs planning for the next steps in learning
 - the best use is made of the outdoor environment to develop all areas of learning for children.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Stiperstones is part of a federation with Chirbury CofE Primary School. The acting executive headteacher, who is also headteacher of Norbury Primary School, an outstanding school, has been supporting the federation since early 2017. He divides his time between the three schools. Governors are currently consulting with parents to federate the three schools. The consultation period ends in July 2018. Parents who spoke with the inspector during the inspection said they valued the discussion and open conversations on the proposed federation.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have made significant improvements to teaching and learning in key stage 1. The acting executive headteacher, together with the teacher-in-charge, has driven improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. Staff have confidence in the leadership and have benefited from improved training opportunities across the three schools and at local authority network and moderation events.
- The acting executive headteacher has created a trusting, supportive school culture. He values the talents and abilities of staff and celebrates their achievements. Staff appreciate opportunities to work collaboratively within the federation, as well as with Norbury School, and they are keen to learn and progress. As a result, teaching is now good, with improving outcomes in all key stages.
- It is mainly the local authority and its brokered support for the school that have carried out the monitoring of teaching and learning. The acting executive headteacher is now in a position to monitor teaching and learning. He knows the strengths in teaching and learning and is clear on next steps for improvement. Historical weaker teaching has resulted in significant gaps in pupils' learning and, as a result, since the last inspection leaders have introduced effective, focused programmes for individual pupils. However, inspection evidence shows that not all pupils have yet caught up in all areas of learning.
- The curriculum is well balanced across all subjects and is providing pupils with memorable and exciting learning experiences. First-hand experiences such as residential visits with Chirbury CofE Primary and Norbury Primary to outdoor adventure sites and seaside visits to Borth and Newquay, where pupils learn to paddleboard, kayak and surf in the sea, have enabled pupils to develop a wide range of skills. Year 6's recent visit to Normandy provided opportunities for them to speak French, learn about the culture and explore the history of the D-day landings. Good links are carefully made between subjects to develop literacy and mathematics skills across the curriculum. Pupils benefit from a range of after-school activities.
- Leaders and staff support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well through the curriculum and assemblies. Pupils understand democracy, the democratic system and British values of tolerance and respect. Through religious education they learn about different religions. Pupils show appreciation and respect for those from different backgrounds and with different beliefs. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Parents have very positive views of the school. 'I know there have been some staffing issues, but the children are not affected by it and that just goes to show what a

brilliant team the staff are at making sure the children are happy, settled and in a great routine,' was typical of the responses received. The school's partnership with parents and the community is a strength. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning at home. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said they would recommend the school to others.

Governance

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors are working to ensure that there is substantive and sustainable leadership in the federation. Since the last inspection, two new governors have joined the governing body, and the induction training for new governors has been thorough.
- The local authority has provided a high level of support to the school since the last inspection. The local authority officer knows the school well and she has provided an appropriate level of challenge to governors. The external review of governance in 2017 has resulted in clear committee structures, improved training for governors and a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- Governors have an accurate view of the strengths and vulnerabilities of the school. They understand their role and are now providing greater levels of challenge in holding leaders to account for the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. Governors have ensured that the school's website meets requirements in all areas except the use of the PE and sport premium. Historically, governors have not monitored the use of this additional funding. This has resulted in funding in previous years not being fully spent. Governors are working to address this. They know they have a responsibility to share information about the use of the sport premium funding on the school website.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and expertise, and they know the community well. Together with the acting executive headteacher, they are evaluating action plans to see where progress is being made. Governors monitor the use of pupil premium funding and now know the impact that this funding is having on outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective, and staff training is up to date. Checks on staff are all in place; the school's single central record is compliant.
- The school site is safe for pupils and visitors are checked on arrival. Checks are in place for volunteers in school. Staff are vigilant. They are sensitive to any changes in how the pupils present. Good links with external agencies support pupils and their families.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe. They understand about road safety and water safety, because these are taught well through everyday experiences and off-site visits, for example the teaching of water safety on a visit to Borth and road safety through mountain-biking experiences.
- Pupils are safe in school, and they feel safe and well cared for. Leaders have improved the safety of the site with new gates. Safety checks are made before pupils use the school field close to the school building.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching across the school is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well to plan interesting and innovative lessons for pupils. As a result, pupils are achieving well in key stages 1 and 2.
- In the mixed-age classes, teachers plan carefully to ensure that the work that is set challenges pupils in every year group. Additional adults provide help and support for those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The teacher in key stage 1 and early years who joined the school in January 2018 re-assessed the pupils, creating an accurate baseline for progress this year, because assessment information from previous academic years and the start of this academic year was not accurate. From inspection evidence collected, it is clear that pupils are achieving well.
- Teachers in both key stages work closely with Chirbury CofE Primary and Norbury Primary School to moderate their teacher assessment judgements. With the support of the local authority, teachers have worked with clusters of schools to check their teacher judgements on where pupils are at the end of each key stage.
- Teachers support reading enthusiastically, and reading is taught well. As a result, pupils are confident readers who are developing and extending their love of literature. Their comprehension skills are good, because teachers set comprehension tasks that challenge all ability groups. Pupils are keen to share their favourite class novel and the authors whose books they enjoy.
- The teaching of writing is good, because teachers engage the pupils' interests and give purpose to the writing. Pupils understand the features of different genres of writing, because teachers provide appropriate exemplars and guidance. For example, when studying the Anglo Saxons pupils write about democracy, comparing the current political system to that of Anglo Saxon times. Their writing is lively and thoughtful. Inspection evidence shows that teaching is planned well to ensure that pupils are able to write with confidence in different areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils are taught to edit their written work. They show confidence in correcting their grammar and punctuation. However, for some pupils in key stage 2, spelling remains a weakness. The school is addressing this with one-to-one programmes of support to develop confidence with common spelling patterns and is revisiting the teaching of phonics skills.
- Pupils are articulate. They use a wide range of vocabulary in their everyday dialogue in class and in regular classroom debates. Teachers have high expectations of spoken English, and challenge the pupils to explore and explain new language. Pupils are confident to check what a word means in the dictionary.
- In the previous inspection report, it was noted that inconsistent teaching in the past had resulted in many pupils having gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers have identified focused programmes of intervention to address gaps in learning. For some pupils in key stage 1, gaps in their basic mathematical skills still exist. Such gaps have been a focus of teaching and there is now evidence of improvement in these pupils' reasoning skills. However, for a small number of pupils in

key stage 1, their basic mathematical skills are at an earlier point of development.

- In key stage 2, inspection evidence shows that pupils are developing their reasoning and problem-solving skills well because the teacher is skilled when questioning pupils. There are high levels of challenge for all ability groups. For example, pupils planning a new bedroom were able to calculate the amount of wallpaper and floor covering they would need. Pupils are able to use their long multiplication skills in real-life problem-solving. This real-life application of mathematics engages them well and they make good progress.
- The most able pupils are given work that is challenging. There is a good match of work to the abilities of all pupils in the classes. This is resulting in good progress in this academic year.
- Teachers regularly set homework. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their children receive homework appropriate for their age.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are proud of their achievements in school and with Chirbury CofE School and Norbury School. The pupils proudly share their motto: 'a small school with a big heart.'
- Pupils show high levels of sensitivity when talking about emotional well-being. They care for others in their community and show maturity when discussing and debating issues, for example when considering crime and punishment today compared with times in history or when discussing the beliefs of others in different world religions.
- Pupils understand about healthy eating. They make good use of the sports field and local area to keep fit and healthy.
- Pupils readily take on roles of responsibility in the class and on the playground. They look after younger children, involving them in play outside.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils spoken to during the inspection demonstrated good levels of understanding about water safety, 'stranger danger', road safety and how to stay safe on the internet.
- Pupils report that incidents of bullying are extremely rare. They recognise that bullying can take different forms. They are confident that they know what they would do if it arose. They are confident that staff would deal with it quickly and firmly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They apply themselves well in lessons. They are polite when listening to the views of others. Staff foster mutual support in the mixed-age classes. Pupils respond maturely when encouraging younger members of the class, for example when commenting on the strengths of their work.

- Pupils behave well in lessons, when moving around school and on the playground. Visits to classrooms and observations of pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes confirm the school's view that pupils are extremely mature and sensible with each other.
- Staff know the pupils well. The school works well with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support that they and their families may need.
- All staff are consistent in their high expectations of the behaviour of pupils. As a result, pupils listen well. Relationships with adults are positive and warm.
- Pupils enjoy school, and attendance is in line with national averages. Staff communicate well with parents to follow up any absences. As a result, persistent absence is low.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, significant progress has been made in pupil outcomes. Pupils in school are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because teaching has improved and is good in all key stages. As a consequence, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Work in pupils' books, along with the school's own assessment information, shows that the vast majority of pupils are working within age-related expectations.
- Historically, there have been variations in attainment in different subjects, in particular in mathematics and writing outcomes at key stage 2. Current pupils are making good progress in writing and mathematics across key stage 2.
- Historical poor assessment practice has resulted in inconsistent progress. The prompt action taken by leaders and teaching staff to address gaps in learning is enabling pupils to catch up. As a result, many pupils have improved significantly in their spelling, writing and basic mathematical skills since the last inspection in January 2018. However, some pupils still have gaps in their learning. The school is addressing this.
- Outcomes in key stage 1 are improving significantly for current pupils, and outcomes in reading and writing now match those in mathematics in 2018.
- Pupils enjoy reading, with many pupils reading a wide range of books for pleasure. Pupils enjoy reading aloud in class and to their peers, as well as to reading volunteers, who visit the school every week.
- The teaching of phonics has improved, resulting in improved outcomes. All pupils have reached the expected standard in phonics in this academic year. Pupils are confident in using their phonics knowledge to sound out unknown words. The Friends of Stiperstones, the parent and community group, has recently purchased new reading resources for the school. Pupils are proud of their enhanced library provision.
- The most able pupils are currently achieving well in school. This is because teachers are skilled at setting work that is challenging. Teachers have high expectations and the work set deepens the pupils' abilities to extend their thinking and use their knowledge well.
- The small numbers of disadvantaged pupils receive personalised programmes of support. This ensures that they are making good progress and developing confidence as learners.

- Inspection evidence shows that pupils are making good progress in other subjects, including science, geography, history and French. This is as a result of good-quality teaching in these subjects and visits being used well to bring learning to life.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress from their different starting points, both in class and through one-to-one programmes with additional adults. The leader of SEN and/or disabilities, who is based at Norbury Primary School, knows the pupils well. Her regular monitoring visits and observations of the pupils mean that programmes of support are refined and tailored to the needs of individual pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- The acting executive headteacher has an appropriate vision for early years. Significant improvement has been made since the previous inspection, and the quality of teaching in early years is now good. Over the past two terms, the children have had stability in the adults in Reception. This is resulting in the children's confidence growing. Their ability to learn from mistakes and have a go is being nurtured by staff.
- Most children join Reception with a range of skills, knowledge and understanding which are typical for their age. Children in Reception are making good progress, particularly in their communication, reading, writing and number skills. The teacher is skilled at matching learning to their interests and needs. Children in Reception are being well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1.
- Reception children are taught in a mixed-age class. Relationships with adults are positive and warm. Children are well cared for and routines are well established. For example, on arrival in school each day the children settle to their morning tasks maturely. During the inspection, children were observed creatively using a picture of a person holding many balloons. The teacher's skilful questioning prompted further learning. When asked why they thought it might be evening in a picture, one child responded: 'Because the sun is going down.' Children are imaginative, creative learners.
- Children behave very well in Reception. They listen well and follow instructions confidently. Adults are attentive to the welfare and safety of the children. The youngest children show confidence and excitement when playing with the older children at lunchtime.
- Leaders have identified that historical assessments have not been accurate. Leaders have taken swift action to address this. Staff know the children well and are able to identify precisely what the children can do. Current systems to collect information on the children do not always provide staff with clear information on the next steps in learning for children.
- Children enjoy playing outdoors. However, the outdoor area is not as inviting or stimulating as it could be. The pursuit of keeping children focused on an activity is sometimes prioritised over the development of exploratory play and following the children's interests. Senior leaders and governors recently received additional funding from the parent association to develop the outdoor play and learning space.
- Strong partnerships with parents are well established. Parents appreciate the ways in

which the school communicates with them. Children are happy, safe, enthusiastic learners.

School details

Unique reference number	123519
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10048231

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Heather Kidd
Executive Acting Headteacher	Mr Les Ball
Telephone number	01743 791207
Website	www.csfederation.shropshire.sch.uk
Email address	admin@stiperstones.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2018

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. The first class is Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. The second class is a key stage 2 class.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- Currently, the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school is in a federation with Chirbury CofE Primary School. The schools federated in 2012 when faced with possible closure.
- The acting executive headteacher, who is headteacher of Norbury Primary School, visits the school regularly.
- The teacher-in-charge manages the school on a daily basis.

- All pupils are of White British heritage and all speak English as their first language.
- The governors operate a before- and after-school club on the school premises when required by parents.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes. She saw eight parts of lessons and one assembly. All lessons were jointly observed with the acting executive headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning and reviewed work in their books.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the acting executive headteacher, the teacher-in-charge, other staff with leadership responsibilities from the federation schools and governors from the federation.
- The inspector took account of 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the seven free-text responses. The inspector also spoke to parents at the start of school each day.
- Pupils' views were considered by talking to pupils both formally and informally during the inspection. The 13 pupil responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire were taken into account.
- The inspector took account of the nine staff responses to the Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning and reviewed work in pupils' books across a range of subjects.
- The inspector reviewed a number of documents, including on safeguarding and attendance, records relating to behaviour, minutes of governors' meetings, improvement plans, achievement information and leaders' reports about the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Pamela Matty, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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