

Stanley (Crook) Primary School

Wooley Terrace, Stanley Crook, Crook, County Durham DL15 9AN

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has successfully embedded an inclusive, welcoming ethos in this extremely happy school. The astute, insightful care and attention given to pupils' emotional, personal, social and moral development is exceptional.
- Senior leaders' actions have secured strengths and consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across key stages and subjects. The curriculum is enhanced effectively via a wide array of enrichment activities. This is greatly appreciated by parents and pupils alike.
- Governors and the headteacher are ambitious for all pupils. Governors question leaders about the effectiveness of their work and actions. Sometimes, however, governors do not dig deeply enough into leaders' responses and reports to get the information that they need.
- Leaders have threaded fundamental British values through the curriculum in an effective manner. Pupils and staff are united in their efforts to abide by the inherent principles.
- Leaders ensure that reading is always high on the agenda. Pupils' attainment in reading by the end of key stage 2 has been above the national average over time at the expected standard. However, a small proportion of current pupils are making weaker progress in their reading. These pupils read infrequently with skilled adults in school.
- Subject leaders are knowledgeable and skilled in their areas of responsibility. Nonetheless, some aspects of improvement planning are not sharp enough to ensure that actions and subject-specific priorities are firmly focused on improving teaching and deepening learning.
- Adults' positive rapport with pupils is evident in all that they do. Their well-honed skills in setting a productive learning environment result in excellent 'can do' attitudes among pupils. Pupils are immensely proud of their own and others' achievements.
- Teachers' own subject knowledge is secure. They use assessment information well to plan learning opportunities and tasks that capture pupils' interests and meet their needs.
- There is a keen desire among teaching staff to make learning purposeful and meaningful for pupils across subjects. At times, in subjects other than English, expectations of the quality of pupils' handwriting and accuracy in spelling, are not consistently high.
- Children in the early years make good progress overall from their different starting points. They are very well looked after by caring, capable staff. However, in Reception, a small proportion of children do not read or write with sufficient focus and direction to make rapid gains in their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning towards outstanding by:
 - making sure that all pupils in each key stage read regularly with adults in school
 - having consistently high expectations of pupils' handwriting and spelling across subjects
 - ensuring that pupils spell increasingly demanding subject-specific vocabulary accurately
 - building upon the opportunities for children in the Reception class to read and write with greater focus and adult direction.
- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and governance by:
 - sharpening leaders' improvement plans to focus more precisely on improving the quality of teaching and deepening learning across subjects
 - ensuring that governors delve deeply into leaders' responses and information to gain a precise and deep understanding of strengths and weaknesses.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher models high expectations for staff and pupils effectively. His enthusiasm for developing kind, well-rounded and successful individuals is infectious. Together with staff, he has been highly effective in creating a culture of inclusivity in this happy, community-minded school. Staff, parents and pupils are full of words of praise for the welcome they receive on a daily basis.
- The headteacher's keen desire to ensure that all pupils and families will benefit from a caring, safe haven is evident in the ethos that he has shaped and embedded. Building emotional resilience among pupils is a prime goal. Pupils are extremely well equipped with the personal, social and emotional skills and knowledge needed to be successful in later life. This is a specific and striking strength of leaders' work.
- Senior leaders have embedded a curriculum which is underpinned by fundamental British values. Staff and pupils alike live and breathe by the principles inherent in these values. Tolerance and respect are bywords of adults' and pupils' daily deeds, language and interactions. As they move through the school, pupils' understanding of democracy, fairness and equality, heightens. During the inspection, several pupils debated the idea of individual liberty and precisely what this might entail. Their ability to listen carefully to others' opinions and beliefs and to demonstrate respect, even where disagreement arose, showed exceptional skill and maturity.
- Leaders' work to enrich the wider curriculum is successfully capturing the interests of pupils and inspiring them to be aspirational for their future. A wide range of visits and visitors, such as community police officers, firefighters and faith leaders, colour and enhance pupils' experiences. Drama, art and musical opportunities are threaded through their day-to-day learning tasks. Some Reception children, for example, deftly applied their skills of observation and artistic techniques to recreate paintings in the style of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.
- Senior leaders offer staff a rich diet of professional development and training opportunities, for which staff are grateful. Training is carefully linked to individual's needs as well as whole-school improvement priorities. Teachers' subject knowledge, therefore, is strong. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning across subjects.
- Subject leaders have a real enthusiasm for their subjects. They have a well-developed knowledge and strong understanding of what their subjects entail. Several subject leaders have benefited from regular training opportunities in their areas of expertise. However, aspects of improvement planning are not sharp enough to secure consistently strong gains in pupils' learning. Some plans focus on procedural tasks and/or subject visits that leaders wish to make, rather than on precisely how they will improve the quality of teaching and learning within their subject.
- Leaders and governors use the primary sport premium funding effectively. Pupils' physical fitness and healthy choices are actively promoted through leaders' and teachers' work. Pupils who spoke with the inspector confidently discussed nutritious foods and talked with pride of their sporting endeavours and accomplishments.

- Leaders ensure that pupil premium funding is used well to make a difference for disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils' outcomes over time remain in keeping with, or are better than, other pupils nationally across subjects.
- The special educational needs coordinator is skilled and knowledgeable. She has designed thorough 'chronology' records for each pupil. Such attention to detail means that staff pay close heed to any external recommendations and advice from partners such as health, educational psychology or social services. Pupils' support plans are therefore well informed. This contributes well to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) making good progress from their different starting points.

Governance of the school

- Governors are proud of their school. They visit regularly, meeting with leaders, staff and pupils to discuss their work. This means that they know and can describe the school's unique, individual characteristics well, for example its far-reaching work within the local community. They understand first-hand what it feels like to be a pupil here.
- Governors are invested in self-improvement. To this end, they ensure that all governors, new and/or experienced, readily access the local authority's governor training services. As a result, governors understand and execute their responsibilities with increasing diligence and skill. Some governors, for example, recently attended training to heighten their knowledge and skills in securing effective use of the pupil premium funding. This has improved their confidence to challenge leaders more expertly in this area.
- Governing body meeting minutes show that governors ask leaders questions about the effectiveness of their work and actions. Too often, however, governors accept first responses from leaders without delving more deeply. They do not always search the information offered meticulously enough to seek the finer details underpinning the facts provided. For example, while governors understand that pupils' attendance is good and broadly matches national averages, during the inspection they could not confidently explain which groups were more frequently absent. In addition, governors were unaware that the school's website, prior to inspection, did not meet statutory requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Following the headteacher's noteworthy example, staff take their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe and well-protected seriously. Adults' efforts and work in this area are, quite rightly, unceasing. Pupils and parents who spoke with the inspector, expressed confidence in their feeling of safety within school.
- Staff understand possible risks to pupils' safety and well-being. Due to regular training and updates, they know what to look out for and are confident about what to do if vulnerabilities and/or dangers for pupils arise. They can, for example, talk with certainty about the various potential signs of abuse or neglect, negative aspects of social media and the dangers of radicalisation.
- Leaders make sure that child protection and safeguarding records are well maintained.

This includes checks made on the suitability of adults to work with pupils. Logs are documented chronologically to ease retrieval and referencing, for example with external agencies. As a result, pupils and staff are protected from potential harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning is good across key stages and subjects. Staff and pupils work harmoniously and productively together in happy, classroom environments where rules and routines are well embedded. The large majority of pupils make good or better progress from their different starting points across the curriculum.
- Teachers use consistent classroom routines and numerous behaviour strategies effectively to set a positive climate for learning. Pupils' good efforts and work are praised as staff deliberately 'catch' pupils behaving and/or doing well. Small triumphs, such as forming tricky letter shapes correctly, are valued and celebrated. Often, pupils spontaneously applaud each other's attempts and little victories. Relationships are affirmative and beneficial for pupils, meaning that favourable attitudes to learning abound.
- Teachers and pupils work harmoniously to get the best out of learning and tasks. Pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about concepts and information through teachers' questioning. Pupils listen carefully and express themselves confidently, explaining their viewpoints and thinking without fear of 'getting it wrong'. As one pupil said, 'It's okay to make mistakes, that's how we learn.'
- Teachers pay close attention to assessment information and targets for individual pupils with SEND. They use recommendations and advice from experts such as speech and language therapists wisely when planning tasks. The correct resources, as well as additional support and/or challenge, are put in place in a timely manner to make sure that most pupils with SEND make good progress in their work and learning.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and skills and use subject-specific vocabulary proficiently. Adults actively encourage pupils to develop their understanding of particular words related to different subjects. In discussions, pupils use language linked with art capably, for example discussing tone, texture and design techniques confidently.
- Most pupils enjoy writing and the work they produce is neat and well presented. Sometimes, though, the quality of some pupils' spelling and handwriting varies across their different books. In addition, at times, their use of inaccurate subject-specific vocabulary is missed by adults and so pupils repeat errors over time. In science books, for example, some pupils in key stage 1 repeatedly spelled body parts incorrectly and in Year 5, teachers overlooked pupils' misspellings of the vocabulary associated with electrical circuits.
- Most teachers read regularly with pupils. Teachers make letter and sound associations clear to younger readers during phonics tasks and are skilled at articulating sounds precisely. Pupils develop a love of books and reading early on in their reading career. They can apply their skills of decoding and comprehension well across the wider curriculum. However, conversations with pupils during the inspection highlighted that some had infrequent opportunities to read with adults in school. Their reading records

confirmed this. These pupils had difficulty deciphering the words in their reading book. This hampers the pace of some pupils' progress in terms of their reading confidence, skills and fluency.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are highly motivated to do their very best. Adults' praise and smiles, or words of encouragement are greatly valued. Small incentives, such as Stanley Crook bronze, silver and gold badges, also inspire pupils and are much sought after. As some pupils said, 'you feel determined to do well', 'you get that really good feeling inside' and 'it feels amazing' when 'all the hard work has paid off'.
- Pupils are proud and vocal about each other's achievements as well as their own. They are extremely sociable and friendly, delighting in each other's successes. Unbidden, pupils help, encourage and support each other, inside and outdoors. Such altruistic, good manners demonstrate pupils' strong personal, social and moral development. Thoughtful, caring and responsible citizens indeed.
- Good emotional health and well-being are actively promoted by staff. Many small acts of kindness are ever-present. Staff and pupils hold doors open for each other. Warm, polite and good-natured interactions brim with mutual respect. Consequently, pupils believe in themselves. They are gracious, confident and well aware of their own role in sustaining the positive ethos that abounds.
- Staff carefully plan a range of opportunities to support and challenge pupils to learn about how to keep themselves safe. Visits from Durham constabulary, the work of the caretaker and emergency fire practices are some of the things that pupils say help them feel secure and safe. Pupils also play an active role in keeping their community a safe place to live and grow up. Several pupils were delighted to explain, for example, how their campaign to reduce speed limits outside their school was successful.
- Those who shared their opinions during the inspection were adamant that bullies have no place here at Stanley Crook. Pupils could, however, explain what forms bullying might take and are therefore well placed to protect themselves and their friends. They have complete confidence that any small worries or incidents will be managed effectively by trusted adults or 'buddies'.
- Fundamental British values are evident in the things that pupils and staff say and do. Several pupils capably discussed principles such as liberty and democracy. During the inspection, they consistently demonstrated tolerance and respect for others, shaking hands and wishing the inspector a good day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff ensure that resources and learning environments are organised effectively. Consistent rules and positive, fair systems for managing pupils' behaviour are well

embedded. Such systems and procedures help develop exemplary attitudes among pupils to learning and school. Disruption to learning is extremely rare.

- Pupils need little in the way of reminders from staff to conduct themselves sensibly indoors and outside. They talk with extreme pride about their duties, responsibilities and the many little things that they do to ensure that the day runs smoothly. From 'playground leaders' to 'box monitors', they all have a part to play in maintaining the positive ethos. As some pupils said, 'there's a lot of teamwork here' because 'together everyone achieves more (TEAM)'.
- Pupils enjoy school and are eager to come here each day. Their good attendance, which broadly matches national averages over time, is testament to this. Leaders took decisive action to address some issues of regular absence among SEND pupils last year. Consequently, fewer SEND pupils currently are regularly absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress and outcomes in each key stage are good over time. Current pupils continue to make strong progress in reading, writing, mathematics and the wider curriculum, due to good-quality teaching and pupils' excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' personal, social, emotional and moral development is exceptionally strong. The remarkably positive, empowering culture within the school community makes a very effective contribution to pupils' well-being. Pupils' skills of tolerance, resilience, courteousness and communication grow apace. In these areas, most pupils are extremely well prepared for later life.
- In key stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading over the last three years has been in the top 10% of schools nationally. Over time, a higher proportion of key stage 2 pupils than seen nationally reach greater depths of learning in their reading. In 2018, pupils' progress in reading was similar to national averages; the proportion reaching the expected standard in reading, however, was well above national averages.
- In 2017 and in 2018, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2, in writing and mathematics was broadly in line with other pupils nationally. Pupils' books and the school's own assessment information show that current pupils are making good progress in each subject.
- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics has remained broadly in line with national averages over time. In 2018, however, the proportion of pupils reaching both the expected standards and greater depths of learning in each subject rose to above national averages.
- All pupils in 2018, in Year 1, reached the expected standard in the national phonics screening check. Current pupils are using and applying their phonics skills well to their reading and writing tasks. The large majority are making good progress in this crucial early reading skill.
- Pupils' outcomes in key stage 1 in writing have been variable over time. Current pupils are making good progress from their different starting points in writing. Nonetheless, pupils' books show that pupils' progress in spelling and handwriting is not consistently strong for a small proportion of pupils in each key stage.

- Pupils make good progress in science. Over time, the large majority of pupils in each key stage reach the standards expected for their age. Teachers' secure subject knowledge in science is ensuring that current pupils make similarly strong progress. This said, some pupils repeat inaccuracies in their spelling of scientific vocabulary. Such errors in subject-specific terminology is also evident in a small proportion of pupils' work in the wider curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. Leaders have an accurate picture of the inherent strengths and weaknesses across each area of learning and provision. They have ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time is consistently strong and improving further.
- Teachers plan tasks and learning that match children's needs well. Topics, books and resources are purposefully linked to specific areas of children's interests. Curiosity is ignited. Children therefore sustain their concentration well because they are captured by, and engrossed in, their work and play. Consequently, most make good or better progress from their different starting points.
- Children's speech and communication as well as their personal and social skills are extremely well developed by staff. Adults enunciate words clearly, deliberately use a range of interesting vocabulary, and explain new words and concepts well to children. This means that children have good role models and learn how to express themselves confidently in full sentences using an increasingly expanding vocabulary.
- Children are very well looked after by staff. Parents who expressed their views agree. One parent's view epitomised the views of others: 'The staff are wonderful here...they really listen and respond to any issues I raise.' Others described their children as 'happy' and 'safe'. Caring, capable staff manage children's dignity, welfare and emotional needs respectfully and in keeping with statutory requirements.
- Staff make sure that British values are threaded through the early years curriculum. Diversity is welcomed and celebrated. Topics and displays such as 'different families, one love' ensure that all children feel welcome, recognising and appreciating similarities and differences. Children are also encouraged to ask 'big' questions, discuss stimuli and express their views. One group during the inspection were intent on extracting tiny pieces of plastic from the ocean (water table) with tweezers to save and protect the sea creatures from harm. Children learn to value the world around them and respect all who inhabit it.
- Children behave well and respond promptly to adults' requests or instructions. They get along well with one another, sharing and taking turns sensibly. Friendships bloom. There is a happy buzz of activity across the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Adults provide children with many opportunities to practise their writing indoors and outside. There are clipboards, sticky notes, whiteboards and notebooks aplenty. Art easels enticed several children during the inspection to express their ideas and practise their fine motor skills using paintbrushes. Nevertheless, children's learning journals show that not all children choose to practise their writing skills regularly. Too often, children repeat errors in letter formation over time. Adults do not model writing or

purposefully direct children to develop their knowledge and skills of writing with enough consistency.

- Staff read stories regularly to children, encouraging them to answer questions about what they see and hear. Children enjoy and join in with well-known, repetitive storylines, building a framework for creating and performing their own imaginative tales. A small proportion of children, however, do not read regularly with and/or to adults in school. This slows the pace of their development in reading.

School details

Unique reference number	114059
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10086831

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Trevor Carroll
Headteacher	Mr David Christie
Telephone number	01388 762858
Website	www.stanleycrook.durham.sch.uk
Email address	stanleycrook@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	8–9 December 2009

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are entitled to pupil premium funding support is slightly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who leave or enter the school at times other than the end or start of the school year is higher than in other schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly higher than national averages.
- The school offers a breakfast club and a range of after-school clubs for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.
- Teaching and learning were observed across classes and key stages. On the first day of the inspection, teaching and learning were observed jointly by the lead inspector and the headteacher.
- The inspector talked with parents face to face during the inspection. The views expressed by 29 parents in the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, were considered.
- The inspector listened to several pupils read, scrutinised pupils' work across a wide range of subjects and talked with pupils during lesson observations. The views of pupils were considered during informal and formal discussions.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders and governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body. A telephone call was held with a representative from the local authority.
- A wide range of the school's own information and documentation was studied, including the self-evaluation document, improvement and subject action plans and records of the checks made on teaching and learning. Information about safeguarding practices was also examined, alongside policy documentation.
- The opinions of staff were taken into account via formal and informal discussions.

Inspection team

Fiona Manuel, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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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