

# Stillington Primary School

Main Street, Stillington, York, North Yorkshire YO61 1LA

## Inspection dates

29–30 January 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Inadequate</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- A legacy of weak leadership has led to too much variability in pupils' progress and achievement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils do not consistently make enough progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. They are not well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Successive external partners and leaders have not stemmed the school's decline. Ineffective governance has allowed the school's deterioration to go unchallenged.
- Over time, leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently effective, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able, are too low. As a result, pupils' writing development and their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics are weak.
- Teaching interventions for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have not been sufficiently focused. Consequently, many pupils make weak progress.
- Pupils of different ages in the same class do not receive work that meets their needs. A legacy of underachievement means that many pupils in key stage 2 are still behind in their learning and work.
- Activities for children in early years are not always well designed to provide sufficient challenge. The most able children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The recent, positive actions of leaders and staff are not sufficient to address the school's endemic weaknesses. Leaders do not have capacity to bring about the rapid improvement needed for the school to function as it should.

### The school has the following strengths

- In a short time, the new headteacher's actions are leading to improvement in the quality of leadership and teaching.
- Pupils display good conduct and value their school community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by staff.
- Children in early years are confident and happy. They benefit from a wide range of interesting activities in a stimulating indoor environment.
- Pupils make strong progress in phonics because teaching is motivating and effective.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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

- Urgently rectify the weaknesses in leadership and governance, by:
  - establishing capacity in leadership at all levels in the school
  - ensuring that governors rigorously hold the school to account for implementing actions to improve pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning, so that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make the progress of which they are capable, by ensuring that:
  - gaps in pupils' knowledge caused by prior weaknesses in the quality of teaching are addressed swiftly, particularly in key stage 2
  - teaching challenges pupils, particularly the most able pupils, to make good progress
  - the assessment of pupils' progress is accurate to ensure that tasks match the different ages and abilities of pupils, including those with SEND.
- Improve the progress of children in early years, including those who are capable of exceeding the early learning goals, by ensuring that teaching challenges children consistently well to consolidate and extend their skills and knowledge.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Significant turbulence in leadership and a high turnover of staff have had a detrimental impact on the quality of education and pupils' progress. Over a sustained period, pupils have been poorly served. Successive leaders have not tackled the endemic weaknesses at the school with the rapidity required. The school does not provide an acceptable standard of education.
- Leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to drive the school forward. Standards have continued to fluctuate since the last inspection and pupils do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Too few pupils, including the small number of disadvantaged pupils, are prepared well for their next stage of education.
- Leaders' inaccurate self-evaluation of the school's performance has been too readily accepted by school governors. Governors have failed to hold leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching and accelerating pupils' progress. The school has been overly reliant on external support, and yet little improvement to whole-school effectiveness has been achieved.
- Until recently, staff have been unable to adequately plan pupils' next steps in learning because the attainment and progress information for pupils was inaccurate. Consequently, pupils of different ages in the same class have not been able to complete work appropriate for their age or ability. This legacy of underachievement means that many pupils in key stage 2 are still behind in their learning.
- The quality of resources to support pupils with SEND is too variable and sometimes pupils are left with no support to complete tasks that are too difficult for them. On those occasions where activities are planned to meet pupils' needs, teaching is beginning to bring about rapid improvement. This variability in practice leads to this group of pupils making inconsistent progress across the school.
- Until recently, leaders did not deploy the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils well. Poor strategic leadership of additional funding has limited governors' ability to hold teachers and leaders to account for its impact. This is now resolved. However, the use of pupil premium funding is not yet enabling these pupils to make the rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics they need in order to catch up.
- The local authority is providing intensive support to the school. This advice, and the recruitment of an interim headteacher, have secured a more coordinated and strategic approach to improving the school. Despite this, improvement in the quality of education provided for pupils is too slow and fragile.
- The headteacher, who joined the school at the start of the spring term, has taken rapid action to rebuild the school and restore parental confidence. One parent described the headteacher as 're-invigorating the school.' Week on week, there are signs of visible improvements.
- The headteacher's evaluation of the school's performance is accurate. He does not shy away from sharing information with pupils and parents and carers. This has been instrumental in rebuilding trust and setting targets for improvement. However, planned

actions are either too new to have had a measurable impact or are not yet in place. The school's capacity to secure further improvements at a suitable pace remains limited.

- Currently, there are limited resources and few other viable options to boost leadership capacity. For example, as well as a heavy teaching commitment for a whole key stage, the headteacher is leading all subjects, safeguarding, provision for pupils with SEND and the pupil premium agenda. This workload for one person is unsustainable and creates vulnerabilities for the future.
- The curriculum offers pupils experiences through a topic-based approach. Pupils, particularly those in key stage 1, are provided with interesting and relevant contexts for learning. However, in subjects beyond English and mathematics, progression is not clear and, as a result, pupils repeat work that is of a similar standard in different year groups.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is fostered well throughout the school. Pupils have a sound awareness of other faiths and tolerance for others. Pupils who spoke with the inspector demonstrated a secure understanding of British values and were able to reflect articulately on the importance of respecting one another.
- The additional primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used well to develop staff's skills and improve pupils' engagement in sport. Pupils enjoy a range of sporting activities and take-up of the after-school club is high. Leaders have ensured that pupils become involved in a range of extra-curricular activities to bolster their experiences.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

### **Governance of the school**

- Since before the last inspection, governors have had to respond to significant changes in personnel, in terms of both staffing and the recruitment of interim headteachers. Governors have failed to hold past leaders to account with sufficient rigour.
- Poor performance has not been challenged effectively, which has led to a legacy of weakness in driving improvement. However, the recent appointment of the new headteacher is recovering some of the ground that has been lost. Governors are now asking the right questions about the school's performance and the effect of the quality of teaching on outcomes for pupils.
- Governors recognise the effect of the headteacher in establishing a more positive environment for pupils and in promoting equal opportunities. In recent months, a comprehensive package of training has been delivered by a national leader of governance to overhaul the work of the governing body. This, along with changes to the leadership of the governing body, are bringing about immediate improvements to the way governors work. There are signs of improvement; however, it is too early to see the impact on school effectiveness.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding and vigilance throughout the school.
- All staff and governors are trained in safeguarding and child protection and know their responsibilities. They know, for example, what to do if they suspect that any child is at risk. All staff and older pupils are trained in how to tackle the influences of radicalisation.
- Policies and procedures, for example for implementing fire regulations, are secure. Governors and others are trained in the safe recruitment of staff.
- Parents, staff and pupils are all confident that pupils are safe in school. Staff, and visitors to the school, give pupils advice on how to keep safe, for example when using the internet. The school's record of recruitment checks on staff is well designed and fully compliant with current requirements.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- Staff turbulence has resulted in significant inconsistency in the quality of teaching.
- Until recently, the weak and inaccurate assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding led to poorly planned activities which failed to meet the needs of individual and groups of pupils in the mixed-age classes. Pupils of different ages and abilities have been prevented from building on their prior learning and making the progress of which they are capable.
- The most able pupils are not routinely challenged. Consequently, they do not achieve higher standards in adequate numbers. While additional challenges are provided, these are not always provided in a timely manner. Pupils sometimes have to sit and wait for an extended period while pupils of other ages or abilities are taught before they receive work at the right level. Consequently, weaknesses in pupils' progress are not picked up quickly enough.
- Pupils with SEND and pupils with lower academic starting points are usually supported by adults during learning activities. When adults do too much for these pupils, they do not get the opportunity to grapple with their work or show how much of it they understand and can do for themselves. This slows their progress.
- The school's monitoring information shows that teaching and learning are not good enough. This has not been addressed with any urgency in key stage 2. Some pupils do not have sufficient reading skills to access some areas of the curriculum. For example, during group work, pupils in Year 6 struggled to interpret words such as 'begged'. Further discussion between pupils demonstrated weaknesses in their ability to comprehend the meaning of complex vocabulary. Pupils are not adept at working independently and they cannot always move their learning forward quickly without adult supervision. Consequently, they make slow progress in too many lessons.
- Staff in key stage 1 have good subject knowledge of phonics and pitch their teaching carefully to meet the needs of pupils. Consequently, more pupils now reach the required standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. Older pupils

who have not benefited from this expertise struggle more to decode unfamiliar words.

- Pupils' writing is particularly weak in key stage 2, where, until recently, pupils had little understanding of what is expected of them. As a result of ineffective teaching over time, pupils are insecure in their understanding and use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Basic errors persist in the written work of pupils in Year 6.
- The reorganisation of groups, well-designed tasks and careful questioning by staff in key stage 1 are enabling pupils to improve their progress in mathematics. Pupils in Year 2 were confident when interpreting word problems and responded accurately to demonstrate their understanding of division. However, only a very small number of the most able pupils are working at greater depth.
- Pupils in key stage 2 do not have a good underlying mathematical understanding of the work that they complete. They do not have the skills to explain their answers clearly and struggle to explain how they solve problems. Pupils have had few opportunities to develop their skills of reasoning. The teacher is working hard to eradicate the gaps in pupils' prior learning in English and mathematics. However, too few pupils are currently reaching the standards appropriate for their age.
- Evidence in books indicates that a large amount of time is dedicated to English, mathematics and science. Pupils say they enjoy the whole-school themes they study, such as 'tomb raiders', 'rainforests' and 'under the sea', and which include subjects such as history, geography and design technology. Key stage 2 pupils are thoroughly enjoying the art activities linked to their current 'Romans' topic.
- Recent improvements are helping pupils to become more independent and improve their progress in lessons. The individual 'handy helper' folders containing useful prompts, numeracy guides, key words and illustrations for phonics are used well by pupils in key stage 1 to improve their own work. Pupils in key stage 2 have responded well to their precise target sheets, which are helping them to identify areas for improvement more quickly than in the past.
- Teachers have positive expectations of pupils' engagement in their learning. Therefore, even when learning activities do not consistently meet their needs, pupils do their best to apply themselves to their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- In lessons, pupils listen respectfully to the views of others, but cannot always set to work quickly when they need to because they are dependent on staff to move them on in their learning. Other pupils happily sit and accept tasks that are too easy while the teacher is working with other pupils. Pupils lack the confidence to try things out for themselves and the resilience to persevere. Although teachers are working to improve pupils' learning behaviours, this lack of resilience has limited pupils' progress over time.
- Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEND, do not consistently receive the precise teaching they need to make good progress. This also restricts their personal

development and welfare.

- There are strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils feel very well cared for, and their parents agree. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that bullying of any type is rare. They are confident about the safe use of the internet and social media. They say that adults will always listen to any worries they might have and will help them if they have a problem.
- Pupils understand that everyone is different and the need to respect and accept those with different beliefs and lifestyles to their own. They show a mature attitude towards equality issues. They enjoy taking on responsibilities in the school council, which give pupils a voice in how the school is run. Older pupils can define democracy and explain how this affects them in their everyday lives.
- Pupils enjoy their daily activities, including the breakfast club and the after-school club. They also enjoy school trips and residential visits to local activity centres.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In lessons, pupils listen respectfully to the views of others, but cannot always set to work quickly when they need to because they are overly reliant on staff to move them on in their learning.
- Although pupils' conduct is often positive, on occasions they can become quietly detached from their learning or restless in class as teaching does not fully engage their interests and abilities.
- Pupils report that behaviour is 'much better than it used to be' and inspection evidence supports this view. The headteacher has responded quickly to ensure that behaviour is improving. Pupils welcome this improvement and are responding positively.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is evident in their good attendance. Pupils told the inspector how much they enjoy being part of such a small, friendly school. Over time, staff have failed to capitalise on pupils' positive behaviour and enthusiasm for school.
- Pupils are extremely polite to staff, peers and visitors. Pupils greeted the inspector with a friendly welcome and were keen to share their thoughts throughout the inspection.
- On the playground, pupils enjoy the opportunity to play games and catch up with their friends of all ages. During lunchtimes, pupils thoroughly enjoy eating their healthy meals together and chatting to one another happily about their day.
- There are no recorded incidents of bullying or disruptive behaviour.

## Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- Pupil numbers in each year group are too small to report on outcomes for individual years or groups of pupils. However, pupils' progress is too variable year on year and too few pupils reach the standards of which they are capable in reading, writing or mathematics. Improvement in the progress made by the most able pupils is not rapid enough. This reflects poor teaching over time.

- The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is too small to make comparisons with other pupils nationally. The support provided for this small group of pupils, however, is not consistently effective and this prevents these pupils from making the accelerated progress required to catch up with other pupils.
- The proportion of children in Reception who reach a good level of development (the standard that is expected at the end of early years) has been variable over time.
- In 2018, every pupil met the required standard in the phonics screening check by the end of key stage 1. The current teaching of phonics is effective, and pupils make the strong progress that they should. Pupils' application of phonics to their writing is improving. This is enabling more pupils in key stage 1 to write with the accuracy and detail that are expected for their age.
- As a result of targeted teaching, pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to make strong progress in writing and mathematics. However, previously lower-attaining pupils are not catching up quickly enough, particularly in reading.
- Too few pupils in key stage 2 are working at the standards that are expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Although current pupils are beginning to catch up, their underachievement has been so extensive that the overall situation remains unchanged.
- Inaccurate assessment of pupils' work and low expectations of what pupils can achieve, based on their prior attainment, result in inadequate outcomes for a significant proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND. Leaders are providing better guidance to classroom staff on how to support these pupils in their work, but staff have yet to act on it consistently.
- Weaker readers who read to inspectors can use phonic strategies to sound out unfamiliar words when prompted to do so, but are reading below their chronological age. Pupils are now reading more regularly in school and a love of reading is being fostered. However, for older pupils, a legacy of underachievement remains. Older pupils struggle with aspects of reading, such as understanding unfamiliar words.
- Inspection evidence shows that although there have been some recent improvements, particularly in key stage 1, these have not been soon enough or fast enough to enable pupils to catch up to where they need to be. Scrutiny of pupils' work and learning over time indicates that too few current pupils in key stage 2 are on track to make good progress, including the most able pupils. The goals set for pupils have not been challenging enough to ensure that they catch up rapidly on a legacy of underachievement.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Children enter Reception Year with skills and abilities broadly typical for their age and stage of development. Early years provision requires improvement because until recently, improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment were too slow. Consequently, there has been variability in the progress made by children.
- Successful training and support from the local authority and an experienced early years leader from another school are helping to improve the leadership and quality of



provision in early years.

- Early phonics is taught effectively and enables children to articulate and recognise the initial sounds of letters accurately. Recent improvements have ensured that there are more opportunities for children to practise their blending skills. As a result, children develop early reading and writing skills well according to their ability.
- At times, and particularly in mathematics, skilful questioning by adults extends children's learning and enables them to strengthen their skills well, especially their problem-solving skills. However, there are sometimes insufficient opportunities for children to work with adults to consolidate or extend their learning, particularly in the outdoor area. Adults do not challenge and deepen learning for the most able children with consistent success because activities are not adapted effectively to meet children's different needs.
- Routines are clear and well established. They enable children to feel secure and to settle effectively. Children respond well to instructions from adults and play cooperatively with each other. As a result, children are happy in the setting.
- Adults form kind and caring relationships with children. Adults understand they have a responsibility for keeping children safe and for promoting their welfare. Staff have accessed appropriate training to ensure that they follow the school's systems and processes. Children's welfare requirements in early years are met.
- Effective partnership with parents begins before children start school. The online assessment system is enabling parents to contribute towards their child's learning.

## School details

Unique reference number	121324
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10059014

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	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Corrine Cross
Headteacher	Gareth Robinson
Telephone number	01347 810347
Website	<a href="http://www.stillington.n-yorks.sch.uk">www.stillington.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@stillington.n-yorks.sch.uk">headteacher@stillington.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	30 November to 1 December 2016

## Information about this school

- The school has undergone considerable change since the previous inspection. The new headteacher took up his temporary role in January 2019.
- The governing body has also changed, including the chair of the governing body.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British or Other White background.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above that seen nationally. None of these pupils has an education, health and care plan.
- The school provides full-time places for children in the Reception classes. There is no Nursery provision.

- Children are taught in two mixed-age classes.
- The headteacher teaches in the key stage 2 class for three days of the week.
- The school runs both a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school received an academy order following the last inspection. Arrangements for the school to join an academy trust have been unsuccessful.
- The school receives intensive support from the local authority.

## Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, class teacher, governors and staff from the school.
- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector visited lessons across both classes to observe pupils learning. A number of visits were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally.
- Observations of pupils' behaviour took place during lessons, in an assembly, at playtime and lunchtime, and when pupils were moving around the school.
- The inspector reviewed a range of pupils' work in English, mathematics and other subjects. The inspector listened to several pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read.
- A range of documentation provided by the school was examined. This included the leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, their development plan, attendance and behaviour information, assessment information and documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the six responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 13 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The views of the parents who spoke to the inspector as they brought their children to school were taken into account. Few parents responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. The two free-text responses from parents were considered.

## Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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