

Inspection of a good school: Stakeford Primary School

East Ford Road, Stakeford, Choppington, Northumberland NE62 5TZ

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils really enjoy coming to Stakeford Primary School. Pupils say, 'It is a lovely school and many people walk out with a gigantic smile on their face.' Pupils are friendly and welcoming. They play well together and include each other in games. There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are well-behaved and keen to receive 'caught being good' cards. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident staff will sort it out if it happens. Pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils appreciate the work of the emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA), who listens to their concerns and raises their spirits. Pupils say: 'She just gets you. She has a chat with you and everyone who comes out of her room is better... she is like a magician.'

Pupils work hard in lessons and particularly enjoy mathematics. They like the structure of the lessons and remember their previous learning. Pupils are less keen on reading and many do not read regularly at home.

Children in the early years are confident and curious. By Reception, children work well together in pairs and small groups. Leaders ensure they meet the welfare needs of children who are two years old. However, the activities in the outdoor learning environment do not meet all of their developmental needs.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Staff ensure that phonics lessons are interactive and follow the agreed programme. Pupils learn phonics from Reception and continue to do so until they have reached a point when they can read independently. Some pupils are learning phonics in key stage 2. Staff regularly check what pupils know. Some pupils have gaps in their phonic knowledge. Leaders believe this to be a result of the COVID-19 pandemic school closures. A catch-up

curriculum is in place taught by staff trained in phonics. Reading books are based on the phonics that pupils learn in lessons. This helps pupils to remember the letters and sounds. Pupils take reading books home to practise what they have learned in class; however, some pupils do not read regularly at home. A few older pupils express a love of reading but others would not choose to read a book for pleasure.

Pupils have a very positive attitude to mathematics. They have good recall of prior learning and can explain mathematical terms well. There are thorough ways to check what the pupils know. Leaders alter the curriculum plans to suit the needs of the year group. This includes addressing any gaps in learning. The experienced subject leader guides staff on the best approaches to take when teaching.

Leaders recognise that wider curriculum design is not as detailed and ambitious as they would like it to be. For example, history and geography are taught through a book-based approach. Teachers start with an English text and connect all the learning to it. This means that in some subjects, the structure of the curriculum does not pinpoint subject-specific knowledge. For example, in geography, fieldwork skills are seldom taught. There is no build up in mapping skills across the age groups. Some younger pupils have more advanced subject-specific knowledge than older pupils. Leaders plan to put a new curriculum in place from September 2022 that has specific subject content.

There has been a rapid increase recently in pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A significant number of pupils receive support for their social and emotional well-being from the ELSA. While many pupils with SEND achieve in line with their peers in mathematics, there are wider gaps in English. The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has identified the need for more specific support plans. The SENCo is working with staff on breaking down targets into smaller steps so that pupils can be best supported in class.

Children in Nursery and Reception benefit from the well-considered environment, including a purposeful outdoor area. All staff model speaking and listening and interact well with children. As a result, children are very confident in talking with each other and adults. The provision for two-year-old children is less well developed. The outdoor area is resourced with play equipment but lacks areas to explore nature or develop large-muscle skills through climbing and stretching. The curriculum is not specifically tailored to meet their needs so they are missing out on developing their independent skills. Leaders have identified this as an area for development.

Pupils talk with confidence about different cultures. Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with a range of opportunities to understand the world around them. Classroom texts are chosen to support pupils in developing an understanding of diversity. Pupils have challenging discussions about stereotypes, and older pupils have a keen sense of fairness and equal rights.

Leaders are looking forward to putting their planned curriculum changes into practice. Governors are kept up to date by the headteacher about curriculum developments. They are involved in checking the effectiveness of safeguarding, the budget and premises. They

have fewer opportunities to check on the quality of the curriculum. This means governors are not fully informed to challenge and support school leaders on the quality of education.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that the wider curriculum, the provision for two-year-olds, support for pupils with SEND and governors' monitoring of the curriculum may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn how to recognise risks to their safety, particularly from online dangers. Online safety is revisited on a frequent basis in the computing curriculum.

Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. They are alert to any sign that indicates a pupil is at risk of harm. Pupils are confident that there is an adult they can talk to if they need help. Any incidents and subsequent actions are accurately recorded. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met. The headteacher provides governors with regular updates on safeguarding.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The intent and ambitions of the revised curriculum are clear; however, this is new and there have been limitations in the previous curriculum structure. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' learning in some subject areas, such as geography and history. Leaders should fully implement all of the new curriculum plans and ensure that these are embedded in the school. This may require additional training for staff members. Leaders should also identify any gaps in learning from previous years and include opportunities to catch up in the revised curriculum.
- The provision for the two-year-old children is similar to that offered in Nursery. This means that their needs as toddlers are not fully met in the curriculum and the environment in terms of independent exploration of the natural world, development of large-muscle skills and opportunities to rest. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is specifically tailored to the developmental needs of two-year-old children and alter the indoor and outdoor environment to reflect the curriculum. This may require additional training for staff on the specific needs of the youngest children in school.
- Governors receive information about the quality of education from the headteacher in their termly meetings. The curriculum developments are mentioned but are not discussed in great depth. Governors miss out on the opportunity to drive their strategic vision with staff and to monitor curriculum development. Governors should prioritise discussions about, and monitoring of, the school's recently revised curriculum so that they can check on the impact of the work undertaken by staff.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	122178
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10227140
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jackie Rowell
Headteacher	Julie Hall
Website	www.stakeford.northumberland.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school started a provision for two-year-olds in 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the early years leader, the special educational needs coordinator and an early career teacher.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in three subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and met with teachers and pupils. The inspector also looked at curriculum documentation.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector scrutinised the single central record and reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. The inspector spoke to leaders,

teachers, support staff, governors and pupils. The lead inspector met representatives of the local governing body.

- The lead inspector met with the education adviser who supports the school.
- Responses to the pupil, parent and staff surveys were also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Mary Cook, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022