

# Stoke Bruerne Church of England Primary School

Bridge Road, Stoke Bruerne, Towcester, NN12 7SD

**Inspection dates** 13 – 14 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The many changes the school has undergone since the last inspection have been exceptionally well-led and managed by the headteacher. Improvements have been rapid.
- The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and works effectively with the headteacher.
- Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, staff from the three federated schools (which work together in close partnership) cooperate well as a team, sharing their skills and expertise to the benefit of all the pupils.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- The vast majority of pupils are making good progress. Standards are rising throughout the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe in school. The emphasis on values makes a marked contribution to the pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance.
- Pupils receive an excellent variety of exciting and interesting experiences throughout the year.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching.
- Pupils do not always have the opportunity to read comments in teachers' marking and to improve their work.
- School leaders, other than the headteacher, do not play a full role in checking on the quality of teaching.
- Teachers sometimes do not provide work that is based on pupils' previous knowledge or understanding or is hard enough for some pupils so that they make the best possible progress.
- Standards in mathematics are not as high as in reading and writing because few pupils reach the higher levels at the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in six lessons involving two teachers, which included three joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector held discussions with school leaders, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The school's work was observed and documentation considered, including: school improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and samples of their work. The inspector heard groups of pupils read and spoke to others about behaviour and safety arrangements at the school.
- The inspector took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by those parents and carers who spoke with him at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Michael Bartleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes; Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 in Class 1 and Years 3 to 6 in Class 2.
- The school is part of a federation of schools including Tiffield and Whittlebury Primary Schools. The executive headteacher, who has been in post since January 2011, manages all three schools and they share one governing body. There have been several changes of staff, both teaching and non teaching since the previous inspection.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from service families) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school other than at the start of Reception is much higher than normal.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching which is outstanding by ensuring that:
  - pupils have the opportunity to follow the guidance they are given in teachers' marking and have the time to improve their work
  - lesson introductions are succinct so that pupils have sufficient time for independent activities and make better progress
  - teachers use their checks on what pupils already know and can do to plan work that is set at the right level for pupils' differing abilities.
- Raise attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 6 so more pupils reach the higher Level 5 by:
  - helping older pupils to close gaps in their knowledge and skills in order to make accurate calculations
  - providing further opportunities to use mathematics and problem solving in other subjects
  - developing pupils' confidence and independent skills.
- Develop the role of subject leaders by giving them more opportunities to check on the quality of teaching in their subject area.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. All groups of pupils make good progress to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. The standards reached in reading and writing are higher than those in mathematics. However few pupils gain the higher Level 5, particularly in mathematics.
- The number of pupils who join the school in Reception is small, but increasing. Each year is different but most children now start with skills and understanding that are typical for their age. Children settle into school quickly and make good progress in Class 1 across all areas of learning. Standards have improved significantly at Key Stage 1 so that attainment at the end of Year 2 was above average in 2012.
- Pupils' progress in writing is accelerating due to improved teaching, a faster pace of learning and good opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects. Writing tasks are well structured often starting with exciting stimuli such as video clips and 'dragon visits' so all pupils can achieve well. However presentation is not always of a high standard.
- Reading is successfully promoted throughout the school. The guided reading sessions are well planned and ensure that there is a meaningful link between reading and other subjects. Visits from authors and opportunities to read with pupils of different ages add to pupils' enjoyment.
- Progress in reading is stronger than in writing and mathematics. Pupils of all ages are taught to use a range of strategies that help them to read with confidence. Younger pupils make excellent use of their knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) to read unfamiliar text and most enjoy reading a wide variety of books. All pupils in Year 1 reached the required standard for the national screening test in phonics in 2012, which is above the national average
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium make similar progress to other pupils. A range of approaches, such as one-to-one support from the excellent teaching assistants is resulting in an increasing number of pupils making good progress
- The pupil premium is also used to enable eligible pupils to take part in a wider range of school activities, visits and music tuition. As a result, most pupils who benefit from the pupil premium are currently making good progress. In 2012, the attainment of Year 6 pupils eligible for the extra funding, as measured by the average point score, was below that of others in the school in both English and mathematics. However, the gap between their attainment and that of others is closing rapidly in English, but less quickly in mathematics. A few pupils who arrive at the school towards Key Stage 2 do not reach the same standards as pupils who have been at the school since their Reception Year, despite all of the staff's efforts.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Relationships between all adults in the school and the pupils are extremely strong.
  - Teaching is not yet outstanding because, in a few lessons, teachers do not use their checks of what pupils know and can do to plan work at the correct level to move pupils of different
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abilities on quickly enough. On occasions teacher's introductions are too long which limits the time for pupils' independent activities.

- Pupils are being taught the skills of checking their own work. A positive development has been the introduction of the 'learning ladders' in mathematics which show pupils the next steps in their learning. Older pupils are particularly well motivated and this helps them to make even better progress.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and some feedback explains clearly what they need to do to improve their work further. However, this good practice is not applied consistently across all subjects and pupils are not always given time to follow up on teachers' guidance.
- Good teaching in Class 1 ensures there are ample opportunities for children to make decisions for themselves across a wide range of learning opportunities. Such activities include those provided outdoors, role play and writing. Children develop independent skills well so that the class teacher is able to teach small groups effectively, which rapidly increases rates of progress.
- Teachers create opportunities to write in many different contexts, which develop pupils' interests and stamina for writing well. During the inspection, pupils in Class 1 wrote vivid descriptions of Cinderella's room after having a discussion 'with a real princess' who visited the classroom.
- Changes in the way mathematics is taught, including the use of computer programs, are having a good impact on pupils' progress and enabled Year 2 pupils to reach above national levels in the national tests in 2012. However many older pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge and a lack of confidence which restricts their progress and attainment. Mathematical skills including problem solving are not utilised sufficiently in other subjects.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those who are eligible for the pupil premium and those newly arrived at the school are all well supported.
- Parents and carers who responded to Parent View or who spoke to inspectors during the inspection thought that their children were making good progress. Many parents referred to good relationships between staff and pupils and the caring attitudes shown to all pupils.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** is outstanding

- Behaviour is exemplary. There is a strong emphasis on teamwork in the school and pupils respond to this very positively. Pupils have a great pride in their school and their involvement in developing the school's values makes a marked contribution to their outstanding behaviour. They are proud to wear their colour-coded value wristband earned through good conduct.
  - Pupils work together very well. They have a great desire to learn which contributes greatly to their good achievement. Pupils mix exceptionally well at play times.
  - Parents have confidence in the care that the school provides and pupils agree that they feel happy and very safe in school. A parent described Stoke Bruerne as 'a pupil and family friendly school at the heart of the community'. Virtually all parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire or spoke to inspectors judged behaviour to be excellent.
  - Discussions with pupils showed they understand different types of bullying including cyber-
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bullying. They said that, although squabbles may sometimes arise, there is no bullying in school whatsoever and that, if it were to occur, staff would deal with it immediately.

- Pupils play an active role in ensuring a happy, well-organised school. Year 6 'play leaders' help younger children to play at break-time and are daily reading partners. All pupils are eager to make a contribution to the school as councillors, ambassadors and members of the eco-committee. These opportunities have an extremely positive impact on their personal development.
- The school has close working relationships with a number of outside agencies to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or who have recently arrived at the school. Attendance is consistently above average.
- Through a well-planned range of activities, pupils are helped to develop strategies so that they are able to manage everyday risks for themselves, such as those associated with the internet, water and roads.

### **The leadership and management** is good

- The inspirational and effective headteacher has led the school well during the 'federating process'. There is a very clear view of what has been achieved since the three schools federated, and what the schools can aspire to in the future.
  - The headteacher manages the performance of teachers well, with clear links between the rewards that teachers receive and pupils' good progress. Teachers are set clear targets linked to pupil progress, thus promoting good or better teaching and higher standards successfully.
  - Staff from across the federation are working in all three schools to share their expertise and to support each other. Staff morale is high as all staff can see the benefits to the pupils. However, as yet, subject leaders have not had the opportunity to undertake formal lesson observations.
  - Self-evaluation is thorough and provides a realistic appraisal of where further improvements are needed. The school improvement plan is focused clearly on gaining outstanding achievement throughout the school.
  - Topics bring together different subjects in a way that the pupils describe as 'interesting and fun'. They are enriched extremely well through a wide range of cross federation activities including sports, visits, and opportunities to learn music. Residential visits for older pupils and opportunities to develop scientific and artistic skills add further enhancement.
  - The close sense of community and links with the local church are strengths of the school. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging, and support each other well throughout the school day. Adults and pupils do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Equality of opportunity is promoted well.
  - The local authority has helped the three schools federate. It correctly regards Stoke Bruerne as a good school and provides it with 'light touch' support.
  - The arrangements for safeguarding are very thorough and meet requirements.
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■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have been very active in establishing the federation of the three schools and keeping members of the school community fully informed. They are knowledgeable about the school's performance compared with that of other schools and about the quality of teaching. Governors check the impact of targets for teachers on a regular basis so that they have enough information to see that only the most successful teachers are rewarded by pay. Aspects of the school's strategic plan are reviewed regularly giving governors a clear overview of progress. Governors ask searching questions to satisfy themselves that teaching and learning continue to improve. There are regular reviews of the allocation and impact of the pupil premium funding. Finances are well managed. Governors are diligent in checking the school's safeguarding records to see they are up to date and accurate.
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## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121992
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406070

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	43
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	James Luntz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Eliza Hollis Executive
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 862872
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