

Stanah Primary School

Lambs Road, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire, FY5 5JR

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. By the time they leave Year 6 standards are now above average.
- Teaching is good. Relationships are positive and activities which enthuse and motivate pupils to do well are carefully planned.
- Pupils' good behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils are keen to learn and show respect for each other and staff. They are proud of their school and feel safe and well looked after.
- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, has successfully addressed the recent dip in standards. As a result, pupils' achievement and teaching are improving rapidly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about other cultures and to develop a sense of pride in their own country.
- The governing body gives strong support to the school. It asks challenging questions which hold the school leaders to account for attainment in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is occasionally inconsistent. Pupils are not always given clear advice about how to improve their work.
- Letters and sounds are not always practised enough and work is not consistently neat.
- Pupils are not always well informed about the different types of bullying.
- Tasks do not always match pupils' ability and progress for the least and most able pupils varies slightly in different subjects and classes.
- Leaders do not always track closely the progress to meet the school's targets or check on the impact of support assistants.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons including three observations carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed the teaching of reading skills and listened to pupils reading. They reviewed pupils' work and observed pupils as they arrived at school and at break and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with leaders, staff, members of the governing body and the local authority.
- Information from a range of documentation was reviewed. This included:
 - school self-evaluation
 - the school improvement plan
 - policy documents
 - details relating to safeguarding
 - records held by the school about pupils' attainment and progress
 - governing body minutes.
- Pupils' views of the school were gathered through informal discussions with individual pupils in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Discussions were held with representative groups of pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Informal conversations were held with parents before and after school to provide a picture of their view of the school.
- Sixty-six responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered as well as those of staff and three letters from parents.

Inspection team

Elisabeth Fenwick, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Margot D'Arcy	Additional Inspector
Gordon Alston	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To further improve the quality of teaching and increase the rate of progress by:
 - making it clear to pupils what they need to do to make their work better and providing opportunities to respond to comments after their work has been marked
 - checking that work is consistently closely matched to pupils' needs and is always sufficiently challenging for the small numbers of most able pupils
 - improving the less able pupils' skills in phonics (letters and sounds) and insisting all pupils take more pride in the presentation of their work.
- To further improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the targets set to move the school forward are precise enough with clear timescales to check on the impact of changes
 - following up the impact of the work of support assistants
 - expanding the information provided to advise pupils of all types of bullying.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities which are typical for their age. They make good progress and many of them reach or exceed the good level of development. They are prepared well for Key Stage 1.
- Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013 their attainment was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, occasionally less able pupils do not consistently make as much progress as their peer, particularly in phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This is because work is not always matched to their needs.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The dip in 2013 as a result of earlier staffing difficulties has been promptly tackled and considerable improvement is now underway. Analysis of work in pupils' books confirms that standards are rising rapidly.
- Rigorous checks are made on pupils' progress so that successful actions are taken to support pupils at risk of underachieving. This has resulted in an increased proportion of pupils in Year 6 working at the higher Level 5, with some pupils targeted to gain the highest Level 6.
- Reading for enjoyment is promoted well across the school and most pupils have good reading skills. However, a small number of pupils enter Year 3 with insecure strategies for decoding unfamiliar words because they have not successfully mastered skills in phonics.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to write at length and often produce lively stories using language which conveys emotions such as suspense and excitement. Work is not always presented neatly.
- Mathematics is taught well and pupils have a wide range of strategies to use to solve problems. Older pupils are confident to explain their methods and apply how they have decided on the method which they find easiest. A few do not record their working out and this leads to errors especially for the most able when they needed to take more steps to solve their problems.
- Pupil premium is spent wisely so that pupils receive the extra support they need to catch up with their peers. They are supported in small groups in class and also receive one-to-one tuition. As a result, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same progress as their classmates. Their attainment is 6 months behind their peers in reading, writing and mathematics and the gap in their attainment is closing rapidly. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that every pupil is given an equal opportunity to reach their potential.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs get good support so that they make similar progress to their peers. However, at times the guidance from support assistants in class is not always effective, preventing their progress from being even better.
- The most able pupils make good progress by the time they leave school. However, this varies especially when they are not challenged sufficiently to enable more of them reach the higher levels of attainment.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good teaching across the school is the reason behind progress improving rapidly for most pupils. Pupils are eager to work hard and do well.
- Teachers and other support staff have very good relationships with the pupils and lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of respect and trust. Pupils clearly enjoy learning because teachers set tasks which usually capture their interests. For example, in Year 6 a small group of pupils demonstrated their use of expressive language through a captivating short drama based on a visit to the dentist. It triggered a sense of 'wow' for the other pupils and sparked lots of ideas for writing a diary.

- A focus on teaching writing has improved the quality and length of pupils' writing. Pupils are confident and enjoy writing. They write at length using expressive language which engages the reader. Rapid progress in writing is evident in their books. However, expectations of pupils' presentation are not always high enough and pupils do not always take enough care to produce neat and well-organised work. This is also true of their work in mathematics where poor presentation skills lead to simple mistakes in their calculations.
- Reading is taught effectively with good attention to older pupils applying their skills for research. Although the teaching of phonics is improving, the needs of the less able pupils are not always fully met.
- Good subject knowledge of mathematics is having a positive impact on accelerating progress. Introductions include a challenging task which encourages thinking and using skills right from the start of the lessons.
- Progress is better where pupils have guidance about how to make their work better. However, this is not always consistent, especially where written feedback is not always precise enough to tell pupils what they need to do to improve. They are not always given enough opportunities to reflect on and respond to written feedback.
- Staff use resources, especially technology including tablet computers, successfully in developing pupils' knowledge and skills across the curriculum. In one lesson pupils were skilfully recording their dialogue recounting a story from a character's point of view. In playing back the recordings they could start to improve and refine their ideas about how a character might feel or react in different situations.
- Less able pupils are generally given good support in lessons. However, on occasions not enough guidance from support assistants was available and this resulted in the less able pupils not making as much progress as their peers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very supportive of each other and show kindness and respect to staff and visitors. They are polite and well-mannered in the dining room, in classrooms and when they play together outside.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They are eager to learn and do well, but their work is not always well presented. Occasionally when they are not challenged enough or given adequate support, their enthusiasm drops and they become slightly restless affecting their rate of progress.
- There are consistent systems in place to promote good behaviour which pupils understand. Pupils and their parents say that behaviour in school is good.
- Attendance has improved recently and is now above average. Pupils are mostly punctual for school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Parents are also confident that their children are kept safe and are well looked after in school.
- Pupils have an understanding of bullying and know what to do if they are bullied. They are also confident that bullying will be dealt with. However, a small number of pupils did not have a full understanding of all types of bullying. They said there was some name-calling but that it did not often happen and is resolved well by staff.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example taking part in the school council or the Wyre Pupil Parliament. They are proud of their school, as one pupil said, 'This is a fantastic school, with fantastic teachers.'

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior

leaders, is good. Senior leaders, staff and governors have identified areas for improvement and successfully addressed weaknesses including the recent dip in standards. As a result, standards are rapidly improving and the school is well placed to move forward.

- The school has an accurate view of its performance and sets targets to identify how these can be reached. However, these are not always sharp enough with precise timescales to ensure a close eye is kept on the journey towards achieving them.
- Senior and middle managers monitor the work of their areas of responsibility effectively. They know what needs to be done and have high aspirations for all pupils. Through lesson observations and work scrutiny they are working towards greater consistency in the quality of teaching. A few inconsistencies remain such as in the marking of pupils' work and in ensuring the effective deployment of support assistants.
- The progress of pupils is tracked carefully. Senior leaders tackle underachievement more robustly to ensure that more pupils attain the higher levels as well as making sure those pupils who find learning more difficult catch up quickly.
- The management of staff performance is rigorous. Staff training is carefully linked to the needs of the school ensuring that there is a continuous focus on improving standards. Salary awards are linked closely to pupils' progress.
- Pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. Extra funding such as the pupil premium is used wisely to close gaps in achievement between those eligible for free school meals and their classmates.
- The curriculum is rich and varied providing a wide range of experiences both in and out of school. There are good links between subjects, for instance using the opportunity of planning a theme park in mathematics to learn about advertising, creating slogans and jingles in an English lesson. Music is a strong feature in the school. Pupils are encouraged to be confident in their skills and talents. On one occasion a Year 3 pupil was very skilfully playing a beautiful piece of music on the piano during break time.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are taught to value and respect each other, although the attention given to teaching about all types of bullying, including those that suggest prejudices against other people, is not yet fully effective. Pupils take a pride in their school and their country. They share ideas, resources and information sensibly and learn about other cultures and religion.
- The school makes good use of the primary school sport funding. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a wider range of sports such as tri-golf, tennis and gymnastics and also to take part in adventurous activities off the school site. High-quality training develops staff's skills.
- Safeguarding fully meets statutory requirements.
- The local authority gives very good support to the school. This support has contributed to the rapid improvement in progress made by pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide strong support for the school. They know the school well and challenge the headteacher and senior leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve. They have a wealth of professional expertise which they bring to the role. They review data and have a good understanding of pupils' achievement and ask questions about what needs to be done to further improve progress. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and check that pay awards link to performance. Their excellent financial management has enabled them to restructure the senior leadership team which will provide extra support for the headteacher in driving forward further improvement in the school. Governors also keep an eye on the spending of pupil premium and check that pupils benefit from this support.

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

Unique reference number	119296
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	444028

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Jackson
Headteacher	Hamish Clough
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2009
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