

Dronfield Stonelow Junior School

Stonelow Road, Dronfield, S18 2EP

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher, supported by other staff and the governors, have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have taken action to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- The quality of teaching is good and there are some examples of outstanding practice.
- Most groups of pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. Progress in English and mathematics has improved markedly.
- Attendance rates for all groups of pupils are very high.
- Pupils enjoy school, they behave well and they feel safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Consequently, pupils are confident and articulate, and contribute well to the good of the school and the wider community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to make sure that all groups of pupils, especially the most able, are challenged to make rapid progress in all lessons.
- Pupils do not routinely check their work, or try to work things out for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed ten lessons or parts of lessons, all of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- He also listened to pupils read and observed behaviour around the school and during the lunch break.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other staff, including the English lead teacher and the special educational needs coordinator, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a representative of the local authority, parents and pupils.
- The inspector looked at policies, self-evaluation and development planning documents, monitoring records related to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, minutes from meetings of the governing body, information about pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work.
- The 14 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the outcomes of recent parental surveys conducted by the school were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than averaged-sized for its type.
- Most pupils are White British. Of the small number of pupils who are from minority ethnic heritage, very few speak English as an additional language.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported by school action is above average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that the most-able pupils are stretched and challenged in order to produce their best work
 - making sure that pupils think carefully about their studies, check their answers and try to work things out for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school with attainment that is above average. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has been consistently well above national averages every year since the last inspection. As a result of good teaching and positive attitudes to learning, pupils make good progress over a range of subjects.
- The 2013 Year 6 national test results show a marked improvement in progress in English and mathematics from the previous year. Most pupils made good progress and some made outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics but a smaller proportion than the national average made rapid progress in reading and mathematics. The school's own data on pupils' achievement, observations of pupils' learning and the quality of work in their books confirm that pupils continue to make good progress in all subjects and more pupils, including the most able, are now making accelerated progress.
- Different groups of pupils, including the few who come from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well throughout the school. Senior leaders carefully track the progress made by all pupils so that timely additional support is provided to individuals or groups of pupils when needed. This has led to further improvement in areas such as the writing of the more-able boys.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The school's special educational needs coordinator, supported by the senior leaders, class teachers, teaching assistants and the learning mentor, uses the information about these pupils to make sure that additional support improves their learning.
- Pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support achieve well in the school. Attainment matched their classmates in 2013 and they all made good progress. Good teaching and targeted support from all staff continue to make sure that the achievement of these pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Opportunities are provided for pupils to read widely and often, staff listen to pupils read and there is an expectation that children will read to their parents on a regular basis. More-able pupils read challenging books and weaker readers sound out words and use pictures to help them work out how to read words and understand texts. The school's information on the progress made in reading, confirmed by the inspector listening to pupils read and observing their learning, show that these strategies are having a positive impact.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across all subjects, including English and mathematics is usually good, with some examples of outstanding practice. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those for whom the pupil premium provides support, make good progress.
- Lessons start promptly and pupils are keen to learn. They take pride in their work, which is demonstrated through good presentation and by the fact that they want to share their achievements with staff, parents, their classmates and visitors.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils use textbooks and the internet to build upon the learning that takes place in the classroom. For example, the music projects, which Year 6 pupils were

keen to show to the inspector, began in class but were developed at home.

- Reading, writing, mathematics and communication are taught well across the school. Pupils regularly read in class and opportunities to carry out extended writing tasks and develop numerical skills in subjects, other than English and mathematics, are often taken. In addition to this, pupils are encouraged to present ideas to others and they talk confidently about a range of subjects.
- Teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils work extremely well with each other, study a range of faiths, consider what is right and wrong and take part in musical, sporting and technological activities in lessons.
- Marking is regular and has improved during the course of the school year. It tells the pupils clearly what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Pupils write out words which have been corrected as a matter of course and follow the comments made by the teacher to improve their work.
- Teachers have the skills and knowledge to ensure that pupils can succeed and teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. All staff use questioning well to help learning, intervene at the right times to improve the progress of all groups of pupils and break down tasks into smaller steps when required.
- Pupils enjoy carrying out extended pieces of work but teachers do not give them the opportunity to explore topics in sufficient detail, fully develop their skills, expand their knowledge and think deeply about the areas that they are studying.
- Work is sometimes too easy for the most-able pupils and this does not allow them to achieve their full potential. This is particularly the case at the start of some lessons, when teachers expect them to listen to summaries of what they already know and can do, even though they are ready to move on to harder and more challenging work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and they are proud to be members of the school community. They all wear the school uniform with pride, every pupil takes part in assemblies at the appropriate times and they are keen to take responsibilities in the school and the wider community.
- All the pupils who spoke to the inspector were very enthusiastic about their learning and the wider opportunities provided by the school. This view was supported by the parents. One parent told the inspector that her children enjoy it so much that 'They run to school and skip out at the end of the day.'
- As pupils and parents clearly value the opportunities provided by the school, attendance for all groups of pupils is excellent.
- Pupils have positive relationships with the staff and each other. They are polite, welcoming and friendly. They display good manners and their conduct is responsible and considerate of others. This is illustrated by the way they quickly include new children to the school, the 'buddy system' through which older pupils look after younger ones, and by the respect that they show to visitors.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. All pupils indicated that other children behave well and a large

majority of parents who expressed a view felt that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved. This view is supported by the exemplary atmosphere and behaviour in the school dining hall, the fact that there have been no exclusions for a number of years and the very small number of instances of poor behaviour that have taken place over time.

- In lessons, pupils behave well and this contributes to their good progress. They listen carefully, follow instructions, respond positively to clearly established routines and usually complete set tasks to the best of their ability. However, they do not always take responsibility for their own learning and, on a few occasions, sit and wait for a member of staff to check their work rather than checking it themselves and moving on.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. Consequently, pupils feel safe and all parents agree that this is the case. Pupils are taught how to stay safe through the curriculum, including how to stay safe when using the internet, and they behave in a way that ensures that they all remain safe.
- Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils understand what it means to be unkind to someone else and they are aware of different types of bullying. In addition to this, they are confident that staff will deal quickly and effectively with any unkindness if it happens.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher, supported by staff and governors, have taken decisive action to improve pupils' progress and to make sure that all teaching is good or outstanding. This includes setting challenging targets for all pupils, monitoring progress towards these targets and taking action to make sure that all pupils make at least the progress that is expected of them.
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching mean that school leaders know where there are strengths and areas that need further improvement. When necessary, they have provided support and challenge to individual teachers to make sure that their teaching is always at least good. Some teachers have worked together to share and observe best practice and this has worked well.
- Training for teachers at the school continues to improve teaching. Senior leaders know where the best practice is within the school and provide opportunities for this expertise to be shared.
- Challenging pupil progress targets and ways to improve the quality of teaching inform the process of managing teachers' performance. This has helped to improve both of these key aspects of the school's work.
- Senior leaders closely monitor all that goes on in the school in order to arrive at accurate self-evaluation. This has allowed them to set the school's priorities and identify the changes that have led to improvements in the school.
- Since the last inspection, subject leaders have taken a more prominent role in monitoring progress and the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. This has led to a clear understanding of what needs to be done for further improvement and has supported the work of the senior leaders in the school.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. It contributes to pupils' positive attitudes towards learning. To support the very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that takes place in

lessons, pupils seize the opportunity to take part in a range of spiritual, sporting, cultural and technological activities such as visits to places of worship, residential experiences, theatre visits, tai chi and football matches. A number of visitors to the school also enhance the curriculum. For example, the pupils were enthralled as they worked with a music specialist who visited the school to make different musical instruments and explore the sounds that they made.

- The school has used primary sports funding well in order to increase participation in physical education and sport, develop healthy lifestyles and physical well-being, and to provide opportunities to allow pupils to reach the performance levels of which they are capable. For example, they have hired a lead practitioner to develop staff skills, employed a sports coach, entered a range of competitions and supported pupils so they were able to take part in ice-skating events at a regional level.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Staff and governors have received the appropriate training and, as the school work very closely with families and other agencies, pupils who are at most potential risk are well protected.
- The school engages with all parents to help pupils in the school. All parents who responded to Parent View indicated that they felt that the school was well led and managed and almost all would recommend the school to another parent.
- The local authority has provided support proportionate to the needs of the school. This has included a thorough and accurate annual report which highlighted strengths and areas of development, checking the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' writing and paired observations of lessons.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors visit the school regularly. For example, the Chair of the Governing Body has a weekly meeting with the headteacher, and they go into lessons. Consequently, they have first-hand experience of the quality of teaching and use this when discussions take place about the performance of teachers. They understand how the performance of teachers is managed, know how the best teachers are rewarded and make sure that teachers only get pay rises if their pupils make good progress.
- Governors have taken an increasingly key role in closely checking the work of the school. They receive regular reports, which they challenge by asking probing questions, and they have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use school achievement data effectively and are fully aware of how the school's results compare to similar schools and all schools nationally. They have challenged and supported the headteacher appropriately as she has taken action to improve pupils' progress.

Governors ensure that the school meets all legal requirements and that the school's finances are managed properly. They are aware of the positive impact of the pupil premium and the primary school sports funding but they are not fully involved in the planning of strategies to move the school to outstanding once again.

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	112698
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	440522

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	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Staniforth
Headteacher	Alison Perkins
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2010
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