

Stawley Primary School

Appley Cross, Ashbrittle, Wellington, Somerset TA21 0HH

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' actions have ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. This has ensured that pupils in all classes are making good, sometimes rapid, progress.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. High proportions reach a deeper level of understanding in their learning by the end of Year 6, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils make progress above that of pupils nationally in all three subjects. In reading and mathematics their progress is strongly above that of pupils nationally.
- The school ensures that pupils have the skills to succeed in the next stage of their education. In 2018, every pupil in Year 6 reached the expected standard for their age in the combined measure of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported to make good progress. Their needs are understood well. The additional funds are well spent.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils behave very well at school. They have positive attitudes to learning and want to do well. The school is a friendly and cohesive community.
- Children in the early years receive a strong start to their education. Children transferring from the pre-school are well prepared to access the learning they will meet in the Reception Year. At the end of their Reception Year, children have the skills they need to ensure that they do well in Year 1.
- Teachers plan an interesting curriculum which motivates pupils to want to learn. Pupils say that teachers make learning fun. This promotes pupils' strong attitudes to learning. However, in the curriculum for some subjects, particularly history, it is hard to identify a clear progression for the development of skills.
- Changes to the teaching of mathematics have ensured that the progress pupils, including the most able, make in mathematics has increased rapidly. However, these changes are yet to be fully embedded in all teaching.
- Governors are clear about the strategic direction, and areas of development, for the school. However, their monitoring of aspects of the school's work does not always give them the information they need in order to check for themselves what leaders tell them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors should ensure that:
 - teachers' delivery of the wider curriculum is informed by a clear awareness of the skills pupils are learning in individual subjects, particularly in history
 - changes which have improved the teaching of mathematics become deeply embedded in teachers' practice.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening systems for monitoring the school's work so that governors can check more easily the information they receive from school leaders.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher demonstrates a determined focus on improving the standards pupils reach. She is highly aspirational for every pupil. Leaders have worked tirelessly to address the areas suggested for improvement at the last inspection. As a result, the standards pupils reach are now high and their progress is strong.
- This is a small school in which leaders, teachers and teaching assistants work closely together. Teachers say the executive headteacher challenges them to improve their teaching constantly. The feedback she gives them helps them to improve their practice. Teachers value the professional development they receive and say that it improves their teaching. Leaders, including governors, have addressed the quality of teaching robustly. As a result of leaders' actions, the quality of teaching is now consistently good across the school.
- Leaders for English and mathematics have a strong understanding of the teaching of these subjects in the school and the standards pupils reach. They provide support for teachers in this school and across the wider federation of schools. Activities, such as moderation of pupils' work, across all the schools have contributed to the raising of standards.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is increasing, but is still small. Leaders know the barriers to learning for these pupils well. They use the additional funding for the pupil premium effectively to help disadvantaged pupils make, over time, good progress from their starting points. Systems for the support of children who are looked after are particularly strong, enabling them to bridge any gaps in their learning quickly.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress from their different starting points. Their needs are understood well. Leaders and teachers carefully monitor their progress and adapt their plans and provision as necessary. As a result, current pupils with SEND make good progress from their different starting points. Provision for pupils with SEND is well led.
- The additional funding of the sports premium is well spent. The school has a commitment to ensuring that as many pupils as possible take part in competitive sporting events. Currently, almost every pupil in key stage 2 has done so. Pupils also have the opportunity to try more unusual sports, such as archery. Physical education and sport are well resourced. Pupils say they enjoy physical education lessons and being active.
- Leaders ensure that staff have the training they need to support pupils' personal development and emotional development. Their accurate understanding of pupils' needs underpins the bespoke training staff receive. Leaders' strong advocacy for pupils extends to arranging support from other professionals for pupils and their families.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and wide ranging. It makes good use of the local area; for example, the school uses a local field and woodland for outdoor learning. The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain through activities such as the many sporting fixtures, cultural events with the youth choir, and residential and other trips and visits.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They understand the strengths and areas for development of the school. They can ask challenging questions of school leaders about the standards pupils reach.
- Governors monitor the school's work, for example in checking arrangements for safeguarding. However, their monitoring of other aspects of the school's work does not always provide them with enough information to check robustly the information leaders give to them. Governors are aware of this and are beginning to take steps to develop the governing body's practices further, including the recruitment of new but experienced governors to the board.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. In this small school, all staff work closely together to keep pupils safe. Leaders have made sure that safeguarding policies and staff training are up to date. As a result, staff at all levels know what to do if they have concerns about a child.
- Governors review the suitability of safeguarding arrangements. These include checking that the single central record is compliant and ensuring that new staff are recruited safely. The governors' reviews of safeguarding have led recently to them overseeing the installation of replacement fencing and gates to strengthen the security of the school site.
- Pupils are very clear that they feel safe at school. Their parents wholeheartedly agree. Pupils and their parents say that the school is like an extended family. Pupils are confident that their voices are listened to by adults in school. They are very clear that any concerns they may have will get sorted out quickly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' secure subject knowledge allows them to plan learning that promotes pupils' good progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Their questioning supports pupils to deepen their thinking, for example when working on mathematical problem-solving and reasoning activities, or when developing the structure of their writing.
- Teachers tackle pupils' misconceptions in learning quickly. For example, their teacher's intervention helped pupils in Year 2 clarify their learning about fractions so that they could explain their mistake.
- Teachers' assessment effectively and quickly identifies any gaps in pupils' learning. Strategies are then put in place which help pupils to catch up. This is particularly important for those pupils who may have missed some learning before coming to this school. The progress of current pupils continues to improve in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Additional adults in classes are skilled practitioners. They provide valuable support for

learners of all abilities. They are an integral part of the teaching team, working closely with teachers. As a result, they know pupils' needs and abilities very well. This allows them to help pupils, including those with SEND, to make good progress from their different starting points.

- Teachers have high expectations for all pupils. Teachers match learning to pupils' needs and abilities very well. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn and behave well in lessons. They are seldom distracted from their learning.
- Teachers plan an interesting and relevant curriculum which inspires pupils to learn. For example, in a science lesson in key stage 2, pupils were able to investigate for themselves the conductivity of different materials. Their investigations, such as when using salty water, challenged them to question and develop their scientific understanding in more depth.
- However, sometimes, teachers' planning does not make clear how pupils are developing their skills in other subject areas, particularly in history. For example, in recent learning on the First World War, pupils gathered information from different sources. However, within this learning, there was no exploration of how information might be presented differently by primary and secondary sources. As a result, pupils could not consolidate their skills as historians.
- Reading and phonics are taught effectively and pupils use this knowledge to read and write well. Strategies that promote better spelling are improving the spelling of older pupils. This is particularly helping pupils who have recently joined the school to remedy gaps in their spelling knowledge. Older pupils now check their spelling when editing their work. Pupils can and do support each other, for example by checking a friend's writing as a part of the editing process. By the end of Year 6, handwriting and presentation skills are good. Key stage 2 pupils enjoy the option to use a fountain pen and for many this has led to increasing pride in the presentation of their work.
- Changes to the teaching of mathematics have led to marked improvements in the standards pupils reach. Current pupils benefit from the impact on teaching of the strong professional development that has been offered to teachers. This includes initiatives such as taking part in mathematics-teaching pilot projects. Where practice is at its strongest, the teaching of mathematics is innovative and ensures that pupils of all abilities do very well. However, new practice has yet to be deeply embedded for every year group. Better teaching has yet to be reflected in the proportion of pupils reaching a deeper level of understanding by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching ensures that pupils have the skills they need to be successful in the next stage of their education. When Year 6 pupils leave the school, they are ready for the challenges of the key stage 3 curriculum. This is demonstrated by the high number of pupils who last year reached at least the expected standard for their age in all three subjects of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Parents are firmly of the view that their children are well taught and make good progress at school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They are eager to learn and almost all want to improve their work. Their positive attitudes help them to make good progress in their learning. Pupils are proud of their school and of their work.
- The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. For example, pupils learn how to take care of themselves on the road through training in how to ride their bikes safely, and road safety training. Pupils learn how to manage risk and develop confidence through activities such as forest school and the residential trips they go on.
- Pupils are very clear that they are safe at school. They are very sure that adults listen to them and will sort out any problems. They feel strongly that everyone is known at school. The parents of pupils who have joined the school at times other than normal transition comment particularly on the inclusive atmosphere at this school, which has helped their children settle in quickly.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, many pupils take part in a youth choir which undertakes performances, last year at Exeter Cathedral and this year in the great hall of Exeter University. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sporting events with other local schools.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is indicated by their good attendance. Attendance is stronger than in schools nationally. Few pupils are persistently absent. Leaders monitor attendance carefully and intervene quickly to stop any decline in pupils' attendance.
- Pupils are aware of how their learning now will help them as they grow older, in both secondary school and to gain the jobs they would like to do, such as become a vet, a zoologist or palaeontologist.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Older pupils take seriously their responsibilities around the school, for example when acting as lunchtime monitors. Pupils take good care of each other, for example when older and younger pupils play together at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils say that the school is like a family.
- Pupils follow the instructions of adults promptly. Low-level disruption is rare and therefore learning time is rarely lost. Pupils of all ages know and understand the routines of school and classroom life. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and, almost always, to each other.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Pupils, including the youngest, respond very positively to these. The school is a calm and orderly environment. Incidents of bullying or racist or homophobic comment are very uncommon.
- Pupils know what bullying is. They say it happens very infrequently, if at all. The vast

majority of parents responding to Parent View agree. Pupils are sure adults will sort any such issues out.

- Pupils understand what cyber bullying is. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online, for example by reporting any concerns they might have to an adult, and by not giving out their personal details on a website or app.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- By the end of Year 6, many pupils reach high standards. In 2018, every pupil in Year 6 reached the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching a deeper understanding was above the national figure in all three subjects. In reading and mathematics, the proportion of pupils who did so was over double the national figure.
- Pupils make strong progress by the end of key stage 2. For example, in 2018 their progress in reading and mathematics was significantly above that of pupils nationally. Pupils who leave key stage 1 with middle and higher attainment make particularly strong progress. Current pupils' work demonstrates that they are making similarly strong progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The numbers of pupils eligible for the additional funding of the pupil premium, while still small, is growing. Over time, they make good progress from their different starting points. Importantly, for pupils who have joined the school at different times, leaders and teachers quickly identify any barriers to learning and put in place support which helps pupils to catch up quickly.
- Current pupils with SEND are making strong progress. This is because their learning is carefully matched to their needs. They are very well supported by teachers and by teaching assistants.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils achieve well in reading at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2. Pupils read confidently. They can talk with comprehension and enthusiasm about the books they read. They enjoy the opportunity to use an online reading application. They participate with enthusiasm in the reward schemes that promote regular reading habits and these have increased the frequency of their reading outside of school.
- Phonics is well taught. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics well to tackle unfamiliar words in their reading and writing. Over time, the proportion of pupils reaching the threshold of the national phonics check is rising above the national level. In 2016, all pupils reached the threshold of the check. In 2017, fewer pupils reached the level of the check; however, the support they received in Year 2 has enabled them to catch up on their skills. In 2018, the number of pupils reaching the threshold of the check increased and was close to the national level.
- Children achieve well in the early years. Inspection evidence showed clearly how the most able children are being challenged well, for example when using their skills to write simple, plausibly spelt sentences of their own, unaided. Children have the skills they need to make good progress when they go into Year 1.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the early years have very positive attitudes to learning. Children, including those in the pre-school, are keen to explore and find out more about the world around them. Staff are adept at supporting children in their explorations. For example, questioning and support from an adult allowed pre-school children to articulate why water around their sandcastle vanished into the sand.
- Teaching staff are skilled in providing a curriculum which engages children's interest while ensuring that they are increasing their skills across all the areas of learning. For example, the use of the book 'Room on the Broom' by Julia Donaldson has led to wide-ranging learning in number, including measuring and capacity, early writing and design technology. Children are challenged to extend their learning, particularly the most able of them.
- Children's behaviour in the early years is good. Children collaborate well; they listen to each other and take turns. For example, children at the water table asked each other politely if they could share the resources for pouring the witch's 'potion' when learning about capacity.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Teachers and additional adults contribute effectively to children's learning. Their observations and assessments mean that children's needs are well known. Children who join the setting from other provisions settle quickly into the early years. Any gaps in their learning are identified quickly and the support they receive means they can catch up quickly.
- Phonics is well taught. Children can use their understanding well to support their early reading and writing skills. For example, when making a flip book of their own, the most able children can already independently write simple sentences using phonically plausible spelling and correct basic punctuation.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years. Training is up to date. Welfare regulations, such as the ratios needed of staff to children, are known and followed. Adults know what to do if they have a concern about a child, and will act on this swiftly. Children's good behaviour and strong relationships with the adults around them demonstrate their feelings of security and safety.
- Parents can contribute to the assessment of their child's learning through their regular meetings with staff. There is a close relationship between staff and parents. For example, in the mornings, parents are welcome into the classroom when they arrive at school with their children, providing a good opportunity for the exchange of information. Parents value the welcoming and smooth transition their children make into the Reception Year.

School details

Unique reference number	123706
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10053161

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andy White
Headteacher	Mrs Jacqui Collier
Telephone number	01823 672 486
Website	www.stawleyschool.com
Email address	stawley@educ.somerset.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2018

Information about this school

- Stawley Primary School is much smaller than an average primary school. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The school runs a provision for pre-school children.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The number of pupils eligible for support from the additional pupil premium funding is growing, but is still below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is higher than the national average.
- The school is close to the county border with Devon. Pupils come from both Devon and Somerset.
- The school is one of two small schools in the Wellington Area Rural Federation. The federation supports a third small school. The headteacher of this school is the executive headteacher of the federation.

Information about this inspection

- With the headteacher, all classes were visited to observe pupils' learning. The inspector spoke with pupils about their learning. The work of pupils in every class was examined. The inspector listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- The inspector observed pupils at breaktimes, lunchtimes and around the school, and met with a group of pupils to hear their views about school life. The inspector took account of the 29 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 28 comments received. The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders and governors. A phone call took place with a representative of the local authority. The views of staff were gathered from the school's staff survey and a meeting was held with a group of staff.
- A range of documents were considered, including information on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement planning, minutes of governing body meetings and records of the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The inspector met with leaders responsible for the safeguarding of pupils and examined information relating to safeguarding, the safe recruitment of staff, attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Sarah O'Donnell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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