

Stretton Sugwas CofE Academy

Stretton Sugwas, Hereford, HR4 7AE

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics; their progress in writing is outstanding.
- Pupils who left Year 6 in 2014 did so with standards that were above average in mathematics and high in reading and writing.
- Children receive a good education in the early years and achieve well.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress accurately in lessons and quickly move them on to new work as soon as they are ready.
- Pupils of all abilities find the tasks they are given challenging but achievable if they try their best.
- Teachers make excellent use of homework.
- Parents hold the school in high regard and are very supportive of its work.
- The learning mentor is highly effective at ensuring that pupils make up any learning that they have missed in the past.
- Pupils feel happy and safe at school. They behave well in and out of lessons. Parents, pupils and staff all report that there is no bullying whatsoever.
- Leaders, including governors, have made outstanding use of performance management procedures to tackle weaknesses in teaching and management.
- The headteacher and governors have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching. They have brought about significant improvements since the school became an academy, resulting in better achievement across the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar require improvement because teachers do not consistently identify and correct errors in pupils' written work.
- Subject coordinators do not yet have the skills in analysing data needed to gain a complete picture of achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- Governors have not appointed a teacher to be responsible for the achievement of pupils who are in the care of the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, including five seen jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector listened to pupils reading and analysed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body.
- The inspector considered the 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. He spoke with parents informally and also considered the views that parents expressed in letters sent directly to the inspector.
- The inspector observed the school's work, including arrangements for keeping pupils safe. He looked at a number of documents including: the school's own information on pupils' progress; the school's evaluation of its performance; records relating to attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Driscoll, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stretton Sugwas CofE Academy converted to become an academy school on 31 August 2012. When its predecessor school, Stretton Sugwas CofE Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- An average proportion of pupils, around 17%, is disabled or has special educational needs.
- Around one in 20 pupils is supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked-after children); this proportion is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Governors have appointed a new deputy headteacher and new coordinators for mathematics and special educational needs since April 2014. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar by ensuring that all teachers consistently identify and correct errors in pupils' written work.
- Train subject coordinators to analyse data about pupils' achievement for themselves, so that they can develop a complete picture of the effectiveness of provision in their areas of responsibility.
- Meet statutory requirements by ensuring that governors appoint a suitably qualified and trained teacher to be responsible for the achievement of children who are in the care of the local authority.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has forged a strong team spirit among staff, who all strive to meet his expectations of providing equality of opportunity and the best education for all pupils. Standards are improving across the school as pupils make better progress. Attendance has improved significantly since 2013.
- The improvements in pupils' achievements are a result of strong leadership of teaching by the headteacher and governors. Performance management procedures have been used outstandingly well to tackle weak teaching and limit its impact on pupils. A dip in the performance of pupils in mathematics in 2013, for example, has been addressed with great success. Pupils across the school now make good progress in mathematics and standards improved to above average in 2014.
- The same performance management procedures have been used to improve the quality of management. Weaknesses in, for example, the management of special educational needs have been rectified so that pupils who require extra support are now identified quickly and they receive the extra help they need in a timely fashion.
- Checks on lessons provide an accurate picture of the quality of teaching. Areas for improvement, such as the most able sometimes being given work that is too easy, are quickly identified and teachers immediately respond to the guidance they are given to improve. The most able, for example, now receive tasks that are equally as demanding as others, and they make good progress as a result.
- The curriculum provides a broad and balanced range of subjects. Together with a very wide range of extra clubs and trips, this prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils are taught about how democracy works through, for example, their work with the 'pupils' parliament'. They are taught about an individual's rights and taking responsibility for one's actions. Pupils are taught to respect the views of others and take account of them when forming their own opinions.
- Bees play a large part in the life of the school. The school has its own apiary where older pupils learn to manage the hives while others extract honey, make wax products and market their wares. However, the message the bees send goes deeper and forms the basis of the school's philosophy and teaching. The school motto, 'each bee plays a part in the hive', is used to teach pupils that all individuals are valued and that discrimination in any form is both wrong and counterproductive.
- The extra funding made available to promote sport has been used effectively. The range of sports has been extended, and includes some more unusual ones such as fly-fishing and bouldering. The proportion of pupils regularly taking part in sport has increased significantly as a result of the well-organised and successful role played by the school's sports' coordinator.
- The school meets all requirements for keeping pupils safe. Parents feel that their children are safe at the school. They show very high satisfaction with all that the school does and play an excellent role in supporting their child's education at home and ensuring that children attend regularly and get to school on time.
- The headteacher monitors pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance in detail. He ensures that any pupils who start to fall behind are quickly identified and receive extra help to catch up. Much of this extra support is provided by the learning mentor, whose services are paid for partly through the pupil premium funds. The use of the funds in this way has proved highly effective in ensuring that disadvantaged pupils can achieve equally as well as their peers. The learning mentor is just as effective in the early years, where the lowest attaining children are successfully helped to make up ground they have lost in the past.
- The early years manager analyses data on children's achievement in order to gain a complete overview of the effectiveness of teaching. Other subject coordinators rely on the headteacher to analyse performance data for them. They do not get the complete picture for themselves of how well pupils achieve in their subjects, so that they can better target their observations of teaching to find out what works best and what needs to be improved.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors play a good part in leading the school. They are well informed about the quality of teaching through their visits to lessons and links with individual classes. Governors have an excellent understanding of performance management procedures and apply them rigorously. They have been instrumental in supporting the headteacher's actions to tackle weak teaching and management and have not flinched from taking difficult decisions when necessary. Governors have also ensured that the best teachers are rewarded through pay increases, which has motivated staff across the school.
- Governors have a good understanding of performance data and use it well to ensure that the school's priorities for improvement are the correct ones. While they meet most statutory requirements, governors have not yet appointed a trained teacher to be responsible for the achievement of children who are in the care of the local authority.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show great respect for the school's environment and equipment, and play their part in keeping the school an inviting and welcoming place to learn. They are friendly towards visitors and show a keen interest to learn from those who come to tell them about different faiths and cultures, for example.
- Older pupils play a good role in helping children in the early years to settle quickly by becoming their 'buddies', while others are 'maths ambassadors' who help other pupils to learn mathematics.
- Pupils show a great pride in their books and try hard to produce neat and well-presented written work. They have an excellent attitude to homework and often go far beyond what is expected of them. Pupils in Year 6 concentrate fully on their work, but pupils in other years allow their attention to wander at times and do not always work as quickly as they could.
- Pupils' behaviour around school leads to a calm and quiet learning environment. Lunchtimes are particularly orderly, with pupils queuing patiently and talking quietly among themselves over meals. Pupils play well together, although they report some instances of name-calling. However, they say that these are quite rare and staff take their concerns seriously.
- Attendance in 2014 improved significantly on that in 2013, and is now above average. Punctuality to school is exemplary.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Children in the early years know about washing their hands before meals, while older ones are well informed about staying safe on the internet and when using social media. All have a thorough understanding of how to respond if approached by strangers.
- The school pays close attention to the safety of pupils when working with bees. Only the older pupils, with consent of their parents, are allowed to work the hives. Pupils receive full training in advance of working with the bees and always wear protective clothing. They are always supervised by suitably trained and experienced adults, at least one of whom is always trained in the appropriate first aid techniques associated with the risk of bee stings.
- Parents, staff and pupils all agree that bullying is unknown in the school. The school's own records show that there have been no instances of bullying for at least two years. Pupils are very clear about what constitutes bullying and the difference from one-off acts of unkindness.
- The school site is very secure. Visitors are checked to ensure that they are suitable to talk to children. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are comprehensive, although there are a very few clerical errors on the register of such checks. Governors had already identified these omissions and they

were rectified by the end of the first day of the inspection.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers ensure that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by moving them on to new, more demanding, work as soon as they are ready. In mathematics, for example, teachers check the calculations that pupils write in their books. As soon as it is clear that the pupil has understood the method, they are moved on to a more difficult calculation.
- Classes are split into five or six groups. Each group is given their own set of targets so that pupils all work at a level that is suitable for their ability on tasks that make them think hard about what they have to do. In a Year 5 and 6 writing lesson, for example, where pupils produced autobiographies, the least able concentrated on improving their use of basic punctuation while the most able learnt how to improve their writing through the use of metaphors.
- Teachers set topics for homework that allow pupils to choose what to study and to decide for themselves how they will present their work; for example, as a book or computer presentation. This approach generates great enthusiasm among pupils, who are keen to tell others about their hobbies and interests. Pupils often put a huge amount of effort into their homework and produce extensive written and artistic work as a result.
- The work of staff in the early years with small groups of pupils when concentrating on a specific skill is particularly effective. An adult works with a few specially chosen children to develop a skill that they have previously identified as in need of improvement, such as numbers more than 10. These highly focused sessions bring about rapid improvements in a short time.
- Teaching assistants ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress that is as good as others. They explain tasks to them so that they understand completely what they have to do, but then make sure that the pupils do the work for themselves.
- Teachers link topics together to help pupils see the relevance of what they are doing. In calculating areas, for example, pupils learned about ordering carpet and arranging shapes to ensure they get the best value for money. Pupils are given many opportunities to write in subjects other than English, which plays a significant part in their outstanding progress in the subject.
- Pupils' work is marked frequently. However, teachers do not consistently identify and correct errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. There is considerable variation between classes, and even in the way that different pupils' work from the same class is marked. As a result, pupils' standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar are not as good as those in reading, writing and mathematics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills and understanding that are typical for their age. They make good progress in the early years and start Year 1 with standards that are above average. This is an improvement on previous years, when standards on starting Year 1 were average.
- Those in Years 1 and 2 build well on the early reading taught in the Reception class. The result in 2014 was standards that were well above average in the Year 1 check on reading standards.
- Good progress continues as pupils move up the school, and standards are improving across the year groups. Those pupils who left Year 6 in 2014 did so with standards that were above average in mathematics, and high in reading and writing. These results represent good progress in mathematics and reading, and outstanding progress in writing.
- There are very few differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils. Disadvantaged pupils make at least as good progress as other pupils in the school. There were too few such pupils in Year 6 in

2014 to comment on their attainment without identifying individuals.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. In lessons, they often work in a small group and always have an adult to support them. Teachers ensure that they receive the same amount of their time as other pupils. Such pupils also benefit from the help of the learning mentor, who is exceptionally well informed by the class teacher and special educational needs coordinator as to the precise support each pupil needs to make progress.
- The most-able pupils also make good progress. The proportions reaching the higher levels at the end of Year 6 were well above average in reading and writing. Fewer reached the same high levels in mathematics, but these results still represent good progress as their standards on starting Key Stage 2 were lower in mathematics than they were in other subjects.
- Pupils in Year 6 are avid readers. The most able read demanding texts, such as Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, and explain that they enjoy reading David Walliams' books because, 'He makes such good use of metaphors.' Pupils read extensively outside of school and are very well informed about current affairs.
- The many opportunities that pupils are given to write leads to outstanding progress in English. The time and effort that they put into the content of their writing is impressive, and results in particularly moving accounts. One boy wrote of the impact that finding out that his grandfather had been a bomb aimer for the 'Dambusters' had on him, and how it brought true meaning to the Armistice Day commemorations. The writing was beautiful to read and brought about an emotional response from the reader.
- Pupils' standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar are average, although improving rapidly as seen by the big rise in results in 2014. Nevertheless, progress in these aspects is not as good as that in other subjects. Pupils make too many errors that go uncorrected and they do not learn from their mistakes.

The early years provision is good

- Children achieve well across all areas of learning and start Year 1 with the skills and understanding that ensure that they are well prepared for the next phase of their education.
- The early years coordinator accurately assesses children's progress and analyses the resulting data in detail to provide a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in achievement and provision.
- Standards are improving rapidly because the coordinator focuses on those aspects most in need of improvement. Boys had not made as much progress as girls in writing in previous years, for example, so new resources were purchased that stimulated boys' interest in writing. They now do as well as the girls.
- The staff's work with small focused groups is particularly effective. Adults know what steps need to be taken by children in order for them to make good progress. A small group of the most-able children found numbers in the sand, for example, and the teaching assistant quickly helped them to add the numbers and write the sum they had created.
- Children have a good range of activities from which to choose when they are given a choice. Unlike during the focused activities, when children's behaviour is exemplary, some children do not always settle to an activity they have chosen themselves and this is not consistently identified and addressed by staff.
- Parents are highly complementary about the education their children receive. They receive excellent information about how their child is progressing, but are not sufficiently involved in the assessments that are carried out when children first start school.

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	138055
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	448633

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	122
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shirley Williams
Headteacher	Alex Davies
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01432 760282
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