

Staithe, Seton Community Primary School

Seaton Close, Staithe, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, North Yorkshire TS13 5AU

Inspection dates

18–19 September 2018

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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has managed significant amounts of change successfully, with great sensitivity and professionalism.
- The headteacher has a strong vision for developing a highly engaging curriculum and is well on her way to achieving this. She acknowledges there is more to do to ensure that pupils' achievement in all subjects meets her high expectations.
- Almost all teachers are recently appointed to the school. They work cohesively to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are nurtured systematically over time. Assessment information is accurate and used effectively to ensure that pupils' needs and interests are met.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They are in the earliest stages of their development, however, and as yet are not fully involved in monitoring the impact of their work.
- Governors are committed to the school. A review of their work has enabled them to work more effectively and efficiently. Reports from their most recent meetings show the increased level of challenge now afforded to school leaders.
- Pupils are proud of their school and their behaviour is good. Pupils say that they are happy and feel safe, and most parents endorse this view.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start in their learning. This is because the early years leader is an exceptional practitioner. She has ensured that the quality of teaching is good, and that activities are well matched to children's needs.
- Over time pupils' attainment and progress declined. This is no longer the case. Past weaknesses in pupils' outcomes are being ironed out effectively. As a result, the achievement of pupils currently in the school is improving well. Leaders know that there is more to do to strengthen outcomes further, particularly for the most able and disadvantaged most able pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have introduced more robust systems for tackling pupils' persistent absenteeism. However, there remains a significant minority of parents who do not ensure that their children attend regularly and on time.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress further, particularly in key stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils receive activities that make them think hard about their learning in a range of subjects
 - ironing out any remaining gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, so they are ready for future learning.
- Improve leadership further by:
 - continuing to develop curriculum progression documentation to support the systematics development of pupils' knowledge and skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics
 - ensuring that subject leaders receive the support and training required to undertake their role fully
 - continuing efforts to reduce the proportion of pupils regularly absent from school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, standards over time declined. Immediately upon appointment, the current headteacher recognised this. She took determined action to quickly stabilise the school and reverse the decline. She has expertly managed this transition period with great professionalism and tenacity. Her clear vision for academic excellence and careful staff appointments have ensured that the school is now on a positive improvement trajectory.
- Central to the headteacher's vision is an enriched curriculum that prepares pupils with the knowledge and skills needed for future learning. She has placed strong focus on the importance of reading to enable pupils to access all other subjects and has also ensured that the village's local heritage is valued. One of her first actions was to consult with parents, pupils and staff to gain their views and create the 'Seton' curriculum. Pupils' learning is then contextualised through a 'topic'. This allows pupils to apply their basic skills in a meaningful context. The pupils who talked to the inspector were highly engaged as they spoke fondly about their learning.
- The headteacher recognises that there is still more to do to embed fully the systematic progression of pupils' knowledge and skills for subjects beyond English and mathematics and has clear plans in place to ensure improvements in foundation subjects.
- In addition to aspects of the school's curriculum, a thoughtful programme of assemblies contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development well. Carefully chosen assembly themes and an effective personal and social programme of study are aligned to British values and ensure that pupils' pastoral care is of equal importance. As such, pupils in all year groups are well behaved and are respectful of others.
- The headteacher provides unequivocal, clear guidance for all staff on her expectations for teaching, learning and assessment across the school. This has ensured consistency across all classes and greater coherence within teachers' planning. Lessons are hallmarked by very specific learning intentions that are reflective of the age-related expectations of the national curriculum. Teachers have benefited from high-quality training and support. As a result, they build pupils' learning sequentially and systematically over time. This is supporting the good progress of those pupils currently in the school effectively.
- Another of the headteacher's actions was to increase the checks on the quality of teaching in the school and to strengthen teacher appraisal procedures. Both processes are firmly embedded and inform improvement priorities effectively.
- Although the school is relatively small, the headteacher recognises the importance of building leadership capacity. Consequently, all teachers have additional responsibilities for subject leadership. While subject leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, several are in the earliest stages of leadership and are not fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the impact of their work.
- Leaders have ensured that additional funding for both disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is spent effectively.

Accurate identification of pupils' needs and accurate use of assessment information ensures that current pupils receive a suite of support packages that cover both their emotional and academic needs successfully. Involvement of external advisory staff help to direct teachers' efforts to ensure that pupils, from their starting points, are now making good progress in their learning.

- The physical education (PE) subject leader ensures that the PE and sports funding is spent wisely. He carefully monitors pupils' access to and participation in sporting activities, which has increased considerably since his appointment. He has ensured that in the last school year, almost all pupils in Year 6 successfully achieved their 25 metres swimming award.
- Since the previous inspection local authority officers have continued to monitor the school on a termly basis. They provided highly effective support to the headteacher as she managed the staffing changes at the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance at the school has experienced significant change since the previous inspection.
- Following the appointment of the current headteacher, a review of governance was undertaken. This highlighted some aspects of governance that needed to be improved and provided the stimulus for governors to make some important changes.
- An audit of governors' skills led to a recruitment drive, and the appointment of several new members of the governing body. Recent appointments and changes to the clerking arrangements have brought new knowledge and skills to the governing body, which complements those of existing governors. A review of more recent governing body minutes shows a significant improvement in the level of challenge and questioning now afforded school leaders.
- Governors have reorganised their structure to better focus their time and efforts. A subcommittee structure is now in place, each with their terms of reference. A review of subcommittee minutes shows the marked improvement in the effectiveness of governors' efforts.
- Governors have yet to ensure that the school's website meets the requirements laid down by the department for education. They are acting to remedy this weakness.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, have ensured that the school's safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They have ensured that all staff access relevant training and that they receive regular updates. All staff are fully aware of the important role they play in keeping children safe.
- The school uses an electronic system to record any concerns or incidents. Leaders insist that any concerns, no matter how small, are recorded. As a result, records are comprehensive, and are used effectively to alert leaders to any changes in patterns of pupils' behaviour that may be a cause for concern.

- Leaders use a range of professional partners to support them in their work and ensure that procedures are robust.
- Procedures for managing pupils' absence are now more rigorous and are consistently applied. Any pupil who is absent from school is accounted for swiftly. Should any family fail to be contacted, several actions are triggered until leaders are satisfied that pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- After several years of disruption, staffing is now stable. Teachers are keen to improve their skills and they welcome the support and guidance they receive. This results in high staff morale and coherent and consistent teaching across the school, both of which are benefiting progress and outcomes for those pupils currently in the school, which are both now good.
- Assessment across the school is secure. The headteacher has introduced an approach to assessment that is consistent and accurate. It is used effectively by teachers to identify those aspects of pupils' learning which need further support and intervention. As a result, pupils' progress is improving and any differences in pupils' outcomes are diminishing quickly.
- Historically, the school has tried several different approaches to improve pupils' writing outcomes, none of which have proven successful with any degree of consistency. The headteacher recognised this and at the start of the last school year introduced a new approach to the teaching of writing that is consistent from Year 1 to Year 6. It is expected that teachers plan their lessons around a novel that appeals to pupils' ages and interests. The novels provide a stimulus for various styles of writing and are carefully chosen to ensure that pupils study a range of different genres. This is supplemented with exciting topic activities and visits, which provide pupils with a purpose to write in subjects beyond English. Pupils' work, including from the last school year, showed that pupils made good progress in all year groups. The headteacher acknowledges that there is still more to do to secure pupils' editing skills so that more pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, can be successful in achieving the higher standard.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Upon her appointment, the headteacher introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics. Teachers were supported to use the new scheme and given extensive training to improve their practice. Such training is ongoing. This is paying dividends, as all pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 in the last school year were successful in reaching the required standard in the phonics screening check. Already, a significant proportion of pupils in the current Year 1 are well on their way to achieving the standard.
- The teaching of reading is also improving. Significant investment in new reading books has contributed to pupils' increasing love of reading. A new 'online tool' is used to check pupils' understanding of the stories they have read. All books are coded for reading difficulty, and pupils gain points for every correct answer they submit. Because of the competitive nature of this approach, pupils are keen to better their scores. In doing so, pupils are accessing books with increasingly complex plots and are developing their comprehension skills successfully. Already, pupils have increased their average accuracy score from 84% to 88% in two weeks. This bodes well for the future.

- Each day there is dedicated reading time across the school, where pupils are heard to read by their teachers. Pupils are encouraged to read at home every evening. In the past, pupils were expected to read for 20 minutes each evening. In many cases this did not happen. Teachers now request five minutes, which has had a positive effect. As one parent said: 'It was always a pressure to get my children to read for 20 minutes. Now it's only five, it's easy and by the time five minutes is up, they are into the book and are still reading after 20 minutes!'
- In 2017, leaders undertook a thorough review of pupils' assessment information. This identified weaknesses in pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. Following significant staff training and investment in additional resources, a more focused approach to teaching mathematics is now in place. As a result, pupils are now making good progress in all aspects of their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. Standards in key stage 1 are in line with national averages, which is a significant improvement on previous years. However, leaders are aware that the remaining historical gaps evident in older pupils' reasoning strategies will take longer to diminish.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The headteacher ensures that pupils' emotional and physical needs are met with the same determination as their academic needs. She recognises the importance of nurturing pupils' self-confidence to prepare them for the next stage of their education.
- Several staff members are trained to support pupils' mental health and well-being. A review of several pupils' files shows the highly positive effect this has in enabling pupils to access their learning more readily.
- Pupils have a growing awareness of life in Britain and around the world, because of the many varied curriculum opportunities they receive. Links with a school in India and a raft of charitable undertakings give pupils a greater understanding of the lives of others. A detailed programme of assemblies supports this further.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. Anti-bullying ambassadors are trained to look out for any pupils who may be vulnerable, feeling lonely or who are new to the school. The ambassadors are commended by many for their work. The pupils who talked to the inspector were confident that should an incident arise there was a trusted adult in whom they can confide, and who would deal with their concerns effectively and swiftly. Records of reported bullying incidents endorse this view.
- Lunchtime is highly sociable. Teachers and pupils sit together to eat their lunch and reinforce the importance of listening to one another to reinforce good social skills.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Pupils across the school are friendly and polite. Pupils are keen to talk about their learning and are proud and happy to share their work. They contribute well in lessons and are respectful and supportive of their peers.
- Playtimes are good-natured and lively. There is appropriate supervision and well-established rules to ensure that playtimes are harmonious events. The recently installed climbing frame provides pupils with lots of opportunities to explore and to be physically active during their breaks. The introduction of the 'daily mile' contributes to this further.
- Movement around the school is calm and orderly. Pupils demonstrate good manners, offer 'good morning' and readily hold doors open for visitors.
- In lessons pupils are keen to contribute and participate. They are quickly to work when asked to do so by their teachers. High levels of respect for their teachers and each other are tangible.
- The headteacher is rightly concerned at the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school. The most recent information shows that this was higher than the national average. In the last school year, the headteacher tightened procedures. Every absence is followed up swiftly to ensure that pupils are safe and all staff know the important role they play in supporting this. Newsletters and weekly rewards help to reinforce expectations for full attendance. A review of several pupils' attendance records shows the positive effect these actions have had in improving the attendance of individuals. The headteacher is fully aware that this needs to be monitored carefully and continuously to ensure that pupils' attendance improves further.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have been variable. Although the small cohorts can affect the statistics of pupils' overall outcomes, the headteacher accepts that historically not enough was done to ensure that pupils were adequately prepared for the demands of the new testing arrangements. Despite these historical weaknesses in pupils' outcomes, the headteacher's actions have ensured that this is no longer the case. Since her appointment she has been relentless in her drive to ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are quickly tackled and pupils' good progress is secured. Her work has been rewarded and although there are some remaining differences to iron out fully, particularly in key stage 2, pupils currently in the school make good progress and their attainment is improving.
- Assessment is accurate. Teachers use this to good effect to indicate which aspects of learning need to be consolidated further. Their focus has been to ensure that pupils falling below the expected age-related standards of the national curriculum catch up quickly. Consequently, there is a strong profile of achievement coming through the school. However, leaders acknowledge that their efforts need to focus on ensuring that more pupils, particularly the most able disadvantaged pupils, reach the higher standards.
- Cohorts are relatively small, and the proportion of disadvantaged pupils can vary considerably. The impact of higher instances of persistent absenteeism among

disadvantaged pupils affected some historical outcomes negatively. New systems to tackle poor attendance mean that disadvantaged pupils now make similar progress to that of their peers.

- A review of the school's assessment information indicates that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress against their personal targets and are receiving appropriate support.
- In 2018, all pupils achieved the required standard in the phonics screening check in both Year 1 and Year 2. Already, a high proportion of pupils in this year's Year 1 are secure in many of the sounds needed for the phonics screening check in the summer term 2019.
- Pupils' progress in PE is good. Almost all pupils achieved their 25 metres award in swimming. Pupils have access to a wider range of sports and sporting activities. They acquire age-appropriate knowledge and skills effectively. The introduction of the 'daily mile' is supporting pupils' levels of fitness further.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader was appointed in January 2018. She is an exceptional practitioner – highly skilled and knowledgeable. She has wasted no time in raising expectations of what children can achieve and in securing children's good progress. As a result, in 2018, more children than was previously the case reached or exceeded a good level of development by the end of Reception.
- Transition arrangements are highly effective. Although only the second week of term, children are settled into their new surrounding and routines are well established. In part, this is due to the older Reception children supporting the younger Nursery children. It is also due to the highly positive relationships that exist between adults and children, and the strong emphasis placed upon ensuring that welfare arrangements for children are robust.
- The early years leader has improved provision and ensures that planning for Nursery and Reception children is coherent. Activities are varied and appealing and are formed from accurate and effective use of assessment. As a result, children sustain concentration and are immersed successfully in their play and activities. While this is heartening, leaders recognise that those activities designed to promote children's early writing skills are not always readily and independently accessed by children. There are plans in place to remedy this.
- Assessment is accurate. It is used to plan activities that support children acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to support their future learning. All adults are aware of the aspects of learning that need to be modelled and reinforced, and for the most part, do this exceptionally well. Occasionally, adults' questioning is not always effective in exploring children's thinking and in deepening their understanding. Leaders are already taking steps to remedy this.
- Children behave well throughout the early years. Older children from Reception class act as good role models to the younger children. This ensures that children quickly settle into routines and develop their growing independence. This was particularly evident during the inspection in the outdoor area when older pupils got themselves

dressed and ready for the garden area and the 'mud kitchen'. Younger children quickly followed suit and found appropriate over-trousers and wellington boots to help them on their way.

- Leaders have recently introduced a new system for capturing and recording children's achievements and involving parents in this. This is very much supporting leaders in their aim of gaining ever-greater links with parents. This now needs to be fully embedded.

School details

Unique reference number	121301
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10053121

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	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Bentley
Headteacher	Helen Isaac
Telephone number	01947 840257
Website	www.seton.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	admin@seton.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 July 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- Because of the size of the school, all pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The overall proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average. In some year groups, over half of all pupils are disadvantaged.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average. However, no pupils have an education, health and care plan, which is below the proportion found nationally.
- Since the school was previously inspected there has been significant change in staffing. The headteacher, school administrator, several governors and almost all teaching staff are new to the school.

- The school's website does not meet the Department for Education's statutory requirements, specifically regarding the most recent pupil premium strategy and several policy updates, which are yet to be completed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes and year groups. All observations were carried out with the headteacher. During lesson observation the inspector talked to pupils about their learning and reviewed their work in books.
- The inspector observed pupils at playtime and lunchtime, talked to a group of pupils about their views of school and listened to them read. A sample of books from Years 1 to 6, from the previous school year, was also reviewed.
- A wide range of school documents was considered as part of the inspection. This included: the school's evaluation of its own performance, improvement plans, data on pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance records, safeguarding procedures, evaluations of the quality of teaching and minutes from the governing body meetings, action plans for various subjects, information about the progress of pupils and monitoring of teachers' performance. Several external documents on the school's effectiveness, from the local authority and independent consultants, were also reviewed.
- The inspector took account of the 37 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector talked to several parents at the start of the school day to glean their views of the school.

Inspection team

Diane Buckle, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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