

# St Ives Infant School

The Burrows, St Ives, TR26 1DH

## Inspection dates

19–20 September 2013

|                                |                      |                          |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected |          |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>              | <b>2</b> |
| 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.

- Achievement is good, reflecting the good teaching pupils receive, and has improved since the school opened as an academy.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes receive a good start to their school life in a vibrant and creative environment. Many make progress that is well above what would normally be expected.
- All pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils who are eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium, make good and often outstanding progress in English and mathematics. Above-average attainment by the end of Year 2 ensures they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They are highly respectful and feel safe in school. Their behaviour is good around the school and in lessons, where they demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning.
- The headteacher provides the school with inspirational and committed leadership. Together with her team, she continues to strive for further improvements while maintaining a culture where everyone is expected to do their best.
- Teachers use the outstanding 'Setting Sail' curriculum to provide work that engages and enthuses pupils to aspire to do the very best they can by encouraging them to think and learn for themselves.
- Teaching assistants skilfully support pupils' learning in lessons, ensuring that they do well.
- Governors challenge leaders well. They have supported the headteacher in her quest to continually improve the quality of education pupils receive and improve the future life chances for all of the pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) is not yet consistent enough.
- Pupils are not always being challenged to correct their spellings by teachers when they mark their work.
- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed seven teachers. This included a 'learning walk' where inspectors made short visits to a number of lessons observing the teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds). The headteacher joined the inspectors for a number of observations.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents and governors.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.
- Inspectors took account of the 29 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire and the 26 responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection and spoke to some parents at the start of the day.

## Inspection team

|                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| John Cavill, Lead Inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Terry Mortimer              | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized school.
- St Ives Infant School became an academy school on 1 September 2011. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and two Reception classes. There are two classes in each year within Key Stage 1.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small proportion of pupils have English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- A junior school and an adult education centre are both located adjacent to the school but are both inspected separately.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding overall by:
  - developing a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) in order to further improve pupils' literacy skills
  - teachers providing more challenge to pupils' spelling when marking their written work.
- Work more closely with parents to ensure pupils' regular attendance at school, especially for those who are persistently absent, in order to help raise their achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities well below the levels usually found. Achievement is good, and often outstanding, in relation to their starting points and most children leave the Reception class with skills and abilities that are generally similar to what would normally be expected for their age.
- Achievement in Key Stage 1 is good. All pupils, including those who are more able, make at least normally expected rates of progress from their individual starting points, and many make substantially more in both English and mathematics. This results in their above-average attainment at the end of Year 2.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language all make good progress throughout the school from their individual starting points. This is an inclusive school where additional support is expertly targeted to meet individual needs and provided by teaching assistants to complement the work done in lessons. This promotes equality of opportunity.
- Pupils are fluent readers and enjoy reading regularly. Reading books are used well to encourage regular reading at home, and this supports pupils' good progress. Pupils in Year 1 were able to talk about the rings around the planet Saturn as they had learnt about this in a book.
- The progress made from their individual starting points by pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding is similar to, and often better than, all other pupils, resulting in the attainment gap closing. The school data for 2013 indicated the attainment gap at the end of Year 2 was further reduced in both English and mathematics from 2012 to less than one term.
- Learning is well paced and challenging and results in good achievement. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, learning was good because pupils were using criteria they had agreed at the beginning of the lesson to judge how well they had progressed. This promotes their independence and good attitudes towards their learning, which is central to learning at the school.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. This is resulting in the pupils' good achievement across the school. In all classes, pupils are keen to do well and enjoy their learning.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children benefit from good teaching in exciting and stimulating learning environments. In the Nursery class outside area, children extended their understanding of worms and slugs by digging in the garden to find worms and were encouraged to discuss with each other what the worms felt and looked like.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations. Lessons are planned effectively and designed well to enthuse and engage all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils have positive attitudes and work together well, keen to succeed.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to monitor pupils' progress in lessons. They use pupils' responses to reshape their work so pupils, especially those of higher ability, are able to make accelerated progress.
- Pupils are taught to think and learn for themselves from the time they start at the school. This whole-school focus on making pupils independent learners ensures they are able to make good progress and extend their learning. Regular independent learning time provides pupils with opportunities to extend their learning in areas in which they are personally interested and develops their skills of enquiry.
- In the best lessons, teachers challenge pupils well to achieve their very best. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were further developing their fine motor skills well with tasks that linked their learning to that in science. Some girls were discussing ways that objects full of water could be stacked on top of each other and made to balance. They were able to explain the difference that water

made when trying to get them to balance.

- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide comments to both praise pupils for good work and indicate the next steps they need to take in order to improve. Pupils respond to this information by making improvements. However, teachers do not always challenge pupils enough to correct the spelling mistakes in their work, which can lead to pupils becoming confused.
- The teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective and helps pupils to read and write better. However, despite some improvement noted this year, there remains some inconsistency in the way that phonics is taught and this is limiting pupils' ability to do well in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Almost all parents who spoke to an inspector or responded to the Parent View questionnaire thought that their child was taught well and made good progress at the school. Pupils agree and say that lessons are interesting and fun.

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

- Pupils are very proud of their school. All pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, say they feel safe and very secure. Parents who were spoken to agree that behaviour and safety are good.
- Pupils, of all ages, are well behaved and eager to learn. In lessons pupils focus effectively on the activities they are given. Off-task behaviour, such as chatting to each other, is rare and is quickly managed by the teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils' attitudes towards their work are good.
- When pupils play outside, move around the school or interact with each other, behaviour is consistently good. They clearly know how to behave and are respectful and polite towards each other and the adults who work with them. Teachers have high expectations for good behaviour, which is understood by children, who demonstrate this in the way that they work and play together.
- Pupils understand all about the different forms of bullying and say that there is very little of it, including physical, emotional and cyber-bullying. They are quick to say that teachers and other adults at the school quickly resolve any problems that they may have. Neither parents nor pupils raised any concerns about bullying, and records show that the school successfully resolves the very small numbers of incidences quickly.
- Pupils have a strong moral code that they show in their understanding of right and wrong. This ensures that they all keep each other safe.
- Attendance is improving but remains below average. The number of children who are persistently absent from school is falling but there are still too many pupils missing too much time at school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and shares with leaders at all levels and with governors a determination to continue to improve the school. There is strong teamwork among staff and morale is high.
- Pupils' progress is regularly monitored and challenging targets are set. Teachers and teaching assistants are all aware of the progress pupils make and they can identify who needs intervention through additional support. Subject leaders monitor the effectiveness of any additional support for the impact on pupils' outcomes, ensuring that only the most effective ones are used in the future.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The highly effective use of the creative and exciting environments in the Nursery and Reception classes helps to enhance children's learning, allowing them to make good progress.
- The performance of teachers is well managed and there is a good link between how well teachers are paid and how well pupils learn. Professional development is carefully matched to

need and is linked to the improvement issues at the school.

- Funding for pupil premium is spent effectively to support pupils who are eligible to receive it, especially those who find learning difficult. This is having a positive effect on eliminating the achievement gap between different groups of pupils and demonstrates the school's commitment to equal opportunities.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and improvement planning is sharply focused on continuing to raise pupils' achievement.
- The 'Setting Sail' topic-based curriculum is outstanding, providing pupils with opportunities to develop their own learning within a framework that is monitored by teachers to ensure that pupils acquire all of the basic skills required to develop them as lifelong learners. It provides a wide range of experiences, both in and out of school, to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders have plans in place to make good use of the primary school sports funding with activities to develop sport as an integral part of the school's curriculum. A good example of this already in place is a yoga intervention activity to help develop pupils' coordination and concentration.
- Parents and school staff are highly positive about the way that the headteacher and her team lead the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are committed and passionate about the future life chances of the pupils and demand that achievement at the school is at least good. They know how well the pupils are doing in relation to all pupils nationally and how effective their school is. Performance management is well understood and teachers' performance is monitored well. Governors visit the school regularly and are fully involved in making checks on all aspects of the school, including whether funding, including the pupil premium, is being spent wisely and having the desired effect on pupils' achievement. They undertake all relevant training. Governors use information about the school well and hold the school rigorously to account, understanding the school's strengths and areas needing to improve. This helps to ensure that all pupils have the best opportunity to succeed and has resulted in good achievement for all. Governors ensure statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are implemented rigorously.

## 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

|                                |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 137468 |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | N/A    |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 426829 |

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

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Academy converter                     |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Foundation                            |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–7                                   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                 |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 187                                   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                    |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | John McWilliams                       |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Joanne Dean                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | Not previously inspected              |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01736 796628                          |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01736 797496                          |
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