

Stalyhill Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106189
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	377372
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Judith Tolley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Cochrane
Headteacher	Sue Kitchen
Date of previous school inspection	22 October 2008
School address	Hereford Way Mottram Old Road Stalybridge SK15 2TD
Telephone number	0161 3384290
Fax number	0161 3048057
Email address	head@stalyhill-jun.tameside.sch.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Judith Tolley
Sheila Loughlin

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 23 lessons, including joint observations with the senior leadership team, and saw 11 teachers. These included short visits to small-group work and guided reading sessions across the school, led by teachers and trained assistants. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan and the school's analysis of pupils' progress. They also analysed 110 parental and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff. No responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were available when planning the inspection.

Information about the school

Stalyhill Junior is an average-sized school. Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage. The school does not identify any disabled pupils. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is low as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Since the last inspection there have been changes to the senior leadership team. The school meets current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school holds Healthy School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Attainment has risen steadily over the last three years. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is high and pupils' achievement is good. Spelling is a comparatively weaker aspect in writing and younger pupils, although they enjoy reading, lack a sound grasp of letters and their sounds (phonics) to read difficult words.
- Teaching is good. The school provides effective support for those with special educational needs, tailored very closely to their needs. Teachers use themes imaginatively so that pupils are engaged and excited by activities. The emphasis on speaking and listening across the school effectively increases pupils' confidence, developing their problem-solving skills and their ability to collaborate with others. Marking gives good guidance to pupils about how to improve their work in English, but this is not always the case in other subjects. Although assessment information is used well to place pupils in appropriate groups, it is not always used precisely enough in lessons, so that on occasions some pupils find work too easy or too difficult.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils typically behave well in lessons and say they enjoy school. Attendance is high. Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning, work very well with others and are courteous and polite. They say they feel safe in school.
- The headteacher, senior staff and the governing body monitor the school's work closely and provide clear direction. Actions taken to raise pupils' attainment in mathematics and English have proved successful and are an indication of the school's good capacity to improve further. Although the quality and consistency of teaching have also improved considerably, there remain some minor inconsistencies. Although subject specialists within the school provide good advice and support, for instance, through advice and training, as yet their monitoring role is not yet fully developed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in English and mathematics further by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is always used effectively in lesson planning to better meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that pupils receive good guidance about how to improve their work in all subjects
 - increasing pupils' confidence and competence in spelling and reading for the younger pupils by introducing a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics across the school
 - developing the monitoring role of subject specialists so that they can more effectively ensure consistency in teaching.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are positive about the school and agree with inspectors that achievement is good. Many pupils join the school with attainment which is above average in relation to that expected for their age. Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points. There is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups. As a result of very well-tailored intervention programmes and individual support for pupils with special educational needs these pupils make good progress. They participate fully in activities alongside their classmates.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is high. Attainment in reading in Year 6 is well above average. Most pupils read a variety of texts fluently and with understanding. They skim and scan for information, identify how authors use literary devices for different effects and use these effectively in their own writing. Although the quality of their writing is well above average in many aspects, it is hampered for some by inaccuracy in spelling. Younger pupils sometimes have difficulty decoding text because of insecure knowledge of letters and sounds.

In lessons learning is good and pupils participate enthusiastically in activities, especially when working with a partner or a small group to explore ideas and solve problems. In a Year 6 class, pupils used information they had from a story to decide which suspect had committed a theft. Effective group discussion enabled them to justify their conclusions to a visiting 'detective' using the conclusions they had recorded. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils learned effectively about pulse rates and successfully plotted these on a line graph in preparation for similar detective work. Pupils are less skilled at applying their writing skills in subjects other than English.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers say that teaching is good. Inspection findings endorse this view although there remain some minor inconsistencies across the school. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilful in their use of questioning to support and extend pupils' thinking both in whole-class activities and in small-group work. Pupils, including the youngest, are frequently asked to share and explain their thinking to others. This effectively develops their speaking and listening skills and increases their confidence to work independently. For

instance, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were asked to explain and demonstrate their working to the rest of the class in deciding the 'best deals' to be had in various supermarkets. In another Year 4 lesson pupils used their numeracy skills to work out and check the prices of individual articles. Teachers use the curriculum well so that in most lessons imaginative activities engage and excite pupils' interest. This promotes pupils' confidence and fascination in learning. Teachers encourage pupils to work together collaboratively and to respect one another's views. Pupils have ample opportunities to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills in a variety of contexts. Information communication technology (ICT) is also used to good effect to extend pupils' learning and experience. In a Year 3 class, for instance, pupils enjoyed watching the performance of two poems and following discussion with a partner, were able to compare and contrast them, explaining the effects of rhyme, rhythm, repetition and alliteration. The curriculum lacks a secure framework for teaching letters and sounds and this hampers the teaching of spelling.

Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan pupils' next steps but do not always plan in sufficient detail for groups of differing ability within lessons. On occasions, resources provided lack the guidance some lower-attaining pupils need so that they do not always manage to complete the tasks in the time allowed. Higher-attaining pupils are not always given the challenge they need to produce their best work. Marking is regular and usually gives good guidance about how to improve. However, the very thorough marking to improve writing in English is not always mirrored in other subjects. Pupils often evaluate each other's work and know how they are getting on and what they need to do next to enable them to improve.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good. Parents, carers and pupils are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with effectively and promptly. Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that this is always the picture of behaviour in their school. They say learning is fun and they are enthusiastic about their learning and their reading. They have very good relationships with each other and are courteous and polite. Pupils display high levels of concentration and, when working in groups, organise themselves swiftly and without fuss. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, pupils were keen to work out and check their answers with others. They did this diligently and with enthusiasm, some working responsibly outside the classroom. In the few instances where pupils lose interest or become restless it is usually because the pace of learning slows or they have to wait too long to begin activities.

Pupils have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside of school and know how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils understand there are different types of bullying and are aware of the need to take care using the Internet. Incidences of bullying and exclusions are rare and parents, carers and pupils express confidence in the school's systems for dealing with such occurrences. Pupils are proud of their school and their achievements. They take responsibilities seriously, for instance, as school councillors and monitors.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, strongly supported by the senior leadership team, provides very clear educational direction, based firmly on a rigorous analysis of pupils' progress, close monitoring and an accurate evaluation of the school's work. Members of the governing body play an active part in the school's self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement-planning

processes. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching, such as joint planning across year groups and team teaching have proved successful. Although subject specialists use their expertise to good effect in helping to plan the curriculum, they are not fully involved in evaluating the impact of change on attainment and teaching in their subjects. As a result, minor inconsistencies in teaching remain. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements, policies are regularly reviewed by the governing body, and staff kept up to date with training. Attainment has improved and progress has accelerated since the last inspection. Issues from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. These are clear indications that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is good and ensures a suitable balance of activities. Although in lessons there are some inconsistencies in matching work to ability, overall the curriculum meets the needs of pupils including those with special educational needs. As a result, the promotion of equality of opportunity is good. The focus on speaking and listening together with the development of an imaginative curriculum has had a major impact upon raising attainment and accelerating the progress of all pupils. A wide range of activities, including music, sport and clubs such as chess, knitting and gardening, broaden pupils' experience significantly and lead to an enthusiasm for learning. Visits, including a residential visit to Wales, as well as opportunities to work with artists, are all greatly valued by pupils. Pupils learn to reflect and appreciate their own skills and the skills of others. This, together with more collaborative work, is very successful in increasing pupils' confidence and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stalyhill Junior School, Stalybridge, SK15 2TD

I would like to thank you on behalf of the inspectors for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you all and hearing some of you read. Your school is a good one. You behave well in lessons and we were impressed by how courteous and polite you were. You do a lot to help improve the school, for instance, through the school council and as monitors.

You make good progress and reach high standards. We did notice that some of you sometimes found tasks too easy or too difficult, so we have asked the teachers to make sure you get the right amount of challenge and the support you need to make sure you can all complete tasks successfully. Some of you struggle to spell correctly and a few younger pupils have difficulty with their reading because they are not very confident in applying their knowledge of phonics (the sounds letters make). We have asked the school to put this right. You work really well with a partner and in small groups to solve problems and this helps you to be confident in exploring new ideas and explaining your own ideas clearly. Teachers plan your work carefully for different lessons and, through scenarios like investigating a crime, for instance, make learning fun. We have asked them to work together to make sure that all lessons are as good as the best. We found that, although you get good guidance about how to improve your work in English, this is not always the case in other subjects so we have asked your teachers to make sure you get good advice in all subjects. You can all help by deciding how to improve it yourselves.

The headteacher and staff are working to make your school even better. You can all help by continuing to work hard. I wish you every success for the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Tolley
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.