

Stocksfield Avenue Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108477
Local Authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	356367
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Kate Pringle

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stuart Bagnall
Headteacher	Miss Sarah Knowles
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Twenty-eight lessons were observed and 15 teachers seen teaching. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, policies and procedures, school development plans and updates of pupils' progress. Views of stakeholders in the school were also considered through questionnaire responses from 47 parents and carers, staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- How well all teachers use assessment and marking to provide individual challenge to pupils.
- Opportunities for pupils, especially boys, to improve the quality of their writing across the curriculum.
- How well all leaders and managers identify areas for improvement and successfully address these to improve outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

Stocksfield Avenue is larger than the average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that found nationally. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background and those who speak English as an additional language are lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average; so, too, is the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school runs a 52-place nursery which is presently full.

The school community moved to a new building in September 2008. A new headteacher took up post in September 2010. There is a Sure Start Children's Centre on site which is also used by 'Chill Out', a privately run care provision which caters for children before and after school and during holidays. This will be inspected separately.

The school holds awards for Artsmark Gold, Eco Schools Green Flag, Investors in People, Basic Skills, Comenius School Partnership, Activemark, Dyslexia Friendly, Northumbria in Bloom and has 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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is a welcoming place and provides a positive climate for pupils to play and learn which is well demonstrated in the good quality of the care, guidance and support provided. Good relationships with parents and carers and with other partners support pupils well and this means that they are well placed to learn. Outcomes for pupils are satisfactory overall. The strengths of the school are well reflected in the way that pupils feel safe, understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle and their good understanding of right and wrong which has a positive impact upon pupils' good behaviour about the school.

Overall attainment is broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. However, attainment in English, especially in writing, is lower, because pupils do not have enough opportunities for writing in different subjects. From entry points which are below those expected nationally, pupils make satisfactory progress; however, this can vary between classes. This is reflected in the largely satisfactory, but sometimes good, progress observed in lessons. The assessment and tracking of pupils' learning are well embedded and teachers have a sound understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. However, not all teachers use this information effectively on a daily basis to challenge pupils through individually focused activities, or to inform them of their next steps in learning. Good relationships between staff and pupils and good attitudes to school mean that pupils are well motivated to learn. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and those who speak English as an additional language make similar satisfactory progress to other pupils.

The ambitious leadership of the headteacher is motivating staff, pupils and governors to share her vision of success. Under her purposeful leadership, staff are working to improve outcomes for pupils. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and there is good understanding of what needs to be achieved to improve outcomes. Improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage, rising attendance levels and the developing creative curriculum all contribute to the outcomes for pupils and their good personal development. Leaders and managers are not presently working to full capacity as they are at different points in developing their responsibilities. The increased professional development, underpinned by good quality systems, is developing their understanding, heightening their motivation and improving understanding of their individual roles. Overall, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure good progression in writing by increasing opportunities for pupils to write at length across a range of subjects about their experiences.

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- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good across the school by:
 - ensuring good pace to lessons and reducing the amount of teacher direction enabling more time for pupils to carry out individual tasks
 - providing opportunities for pupils to engage in challenging activities well matched to their individual ability
 - use marking to clearly indicate success against individual targets and to inform pupils towards their next steps in learning to improve their rate of progress.
- Develop the of roles and responsibilities for all leaders and managers by:
 - sharpening the quality of monitoring and evaluation
 - using rigorous self-evaluation to identify actions which will improve outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that they understand their accountability for raising standards.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning is satisfactory. In lessons good behaviour contributes to pupils' positive engagement in activities. Where they have opportunities to problem solve and be creative, pupils participate particularly well and their rate of progress is quicker.

All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress. A declining trend in attainment since the previous inspection has been halted. Recent test results at Year 6 were broadly average and inspection evidence and school data indicate similar attainment for pupils now in the school. Progress in mathematics is more secure than that in English and, across the school, standards in writing are lower than those in reading.

Pupils talk confidently about feeling safe and how adults in the school are willing to help them overcome their concerns. They demonstrate a growing responsibility for their own safety recognising potential dangers, for example, when using the internet. Pupils keep fit and healthy and most eat a sensible diet at lunchtime. Pupils indicate that they enjoy school. Their good behaviour, together with improving attendance, indicates that pupils want to take part in the many activities the school offers. They contribute positively to the school and the wider community through their roles as school councillors, and especially through the work of the eco-committee who act as ambassadors to other schools for developing sustainable eco-systems. Good opportunities to reflect and be mindful of rights and responsibilities of themselves, and to others, including those who come from different backgrounds and cultures, contribute very well to their good understanding of citizenship and their role in society.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Positive relationships support pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils are eager to please their teachers and engage enthusiastically. There are inconsistencies in practice across the school which mean that pupils' learning varies from class to class and too much is satisfactory. In better lessons there is good pace. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils, and activities are well matched to pupils' individual needs. Teachers provide time for pupils to reflect, consider and to practise and consolidate their learning. In such lessons, pupils are highly motivated and the pace of progress quickens. Where lessons are satisfactory, progress slows because teachers dominate the lesson with explanations and there are fewer practical activities from which pupils can learn. This can lead to inattention because pupils are not fully involved in their learning. Accurate assessment of pupils' learning is rigorous. However, not enough use of this information is used by teachers on a daily basis to provide activities which match the needs of individual pupils. The quality of marking is inconsistent.

The broad curriculum provides ample opportunity for pupils to develop their personal skills and interests. Their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are used increasingly to enhance other areas of the curriculum. New approaches to cross-curricular learning are developing which enable pupils to understand the links between subjects. However, there can be an over-dependency upon worksheets which restricts pupils' opportunities to write at length in both literacy and across subjects which contributes to

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their lower standards in writing. A range of enrichment activities enable pupils to extend their skills in a range of sporting and creative activities; they also garden and learn to cook. Additional experiences of welcoming visitors and going on visits help to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world outside of their immediate locality.

Staff know pupils very well, enabling them to provide good quality care and pastoral support when it is required. Vulnerable pupils are welcomed and quickly included in the school. Their needs are identified and appropriate interventions are targeted through the effective use of a range of outside agencies. This is supported by well-embedded systems and meetings which are used to good effect to track and monitor individual pupils. Pupils of all ages settle quickly and there is a proactive approach to involving parents in cases of, for example, challenging behaviour or where concerns are raised. Induction and transition arrangements are very well developed providing security for children and pupils as they move between their different stages in learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has worked rapidly with staff and governors to identify the strengths of the school and those areas which require action. There is a collegiate ethos wherein all understand their individual roles. Recent actions have increased the level of professional development to ensure that there is heightened awareness, and delegation, of responsibilities. There is a strong sense of commitment towards improvement and raising standards by all leaders and managers. However, some are further along this path than others either newer to the profession or who have had their expectations raised more recently. The monitoring of teaching and learning and the quality of self-evaluation, in some areas, are inconsistent across the school, although they are increasing in rigour under the direction of the headteacher and beginning to identify where improvements are needed.

Governors provide satisfactory support for the school. They ensure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. Governors are working with the headteacher to increase their role from supportive to taking a more constructive role in the strategic direction of the school. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are systematically developing their individual roles so that they can effectively influence the direction of the school.

The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory overall but within the school and the local community it is well established. However, there are fewer opportunities for developing sustainable links with pupils from different backgrounds and cultures. The

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school promotes equal opportunities well so there is little difference in the overall achievement of different groups within the school. Links with parents and with other partners are good and contribute considerably to the provision of rapid and effective support for pupils and their families.

Overall, outcomes for pupils are satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good relationships and care mean that children settle very quickly into this warm environment. Behaviour is good and children learn to share and take turns as they interact with adults and other children. From starting points which, for many, are below those expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy, children make good progress reaching standards which are broadly in line with the national average by the time they enter Year 1. Children who are vulnerable, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or speak English as an additional language are identified early and effective intervention means their needs are met well.

Children demonstrate increasing levels of independence as they are encouraged to make choices through learning experiences which motivate them to explore within the well-resourced setting. Accurate assessment through observations of their progress feed into planning the next steps in learning. Teamwork is good and staff work together purposefully to meet children's needs. Links with parents and carers are good. They think highly of the setting and recognise the qualities of the staff who care for their children and promote good levels of communication with them. Staff recognise the strengths of provision and have clear plans for improvement indicating a good understanding of where

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further action is needed. Strategies are very effective in promoting the welfare of children and all statutory requirements are met.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The number of responses was relatively low. However, the overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were highly positive about the school. They greatly appreciate the care given to their children and are confident that their children are happy and safe and that teachers meet their children's needs well. Of the few concerns raised by parents, there was no obvious pattern and all were fully investigated by the inspection team and form part of the evidence base used to arrive at the judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stocksfield Avenue Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 470 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	55	19	40	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	72	13	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	51	22	47	0	0	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	49	19	40	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	60	17	36	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	45	23	49	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	47	23	49	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	53	18	38	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	51	21	45	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	38	23	49	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	34	23	49	2	4	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	23	49	22	47	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	64	15	32	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



6 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stocksfield Avenue Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE5 2DQ

Thank you so much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to talk to so many of you and thank you to those of you who took the time to fill in the questionnaires. They helped us to understand how you felt about your school and the people who work in it. We feel that your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education, so that you make satisfactory progress in your learning. The adults look after you well and because of this you feel safe and confident. There are lots of exciting things going on and we know that the staff make sure that you have lots of opportunities to enjoy your activities. You are very happy at school and your parents know this.

To help your school become even better we have asked your headteacher, your teachers and governors to concentrate on improving a few things which we feel will help you to achieve even higher. We want them to:

help you all to make better progress in writing by giving you more opportunities to write at length about your experiences across all subjects

make sure that all teaching is good by:

- reducing the amount of time teachers talk and giving you more time to practise and complete tasks
- providing opportunities for you to work on activities which are well matched to you individual needs
- using marking to show when you succeed against your targets and tell you what you need to learn next

give greater opportunities to your teachers and governors to check the work of your school rigorously so that they can identify actions which will help you to improve.

I feel sure that you will help your school by continuing to work hard.

Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kate Pringle

Lead inspector

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