

Stoughton Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124975
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359810
Inspection dates	30 September 2010–1 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Scanlan
Headteacher	Dawn Mayson and Belinda William
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, observed eight teachers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. They evaluated 84 parental questionnaires. They looked at documents including school policies, pupils' progress data, attendance figures, school improvement planning and a range of pupils' work.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress of all pupils particularly for the most able and boys.
- The extent to which the school's actions to tackle absenteeism have been successful.
- The extent to which staff use assessment to support and challenge pupils' learning and secure outstanding achievement.
- The effectiveness of leaders in checking, reviewing and taking actions to raise standards, particularly in writing and reading.

Information about the school

Stoughton Infants is a larger-than-average infant school. There is a local authority managed Pre School Speech, Language and Communication Needs Unit on the premises which provides speech and language support for pre-school children in the southern area of Guilford. At the time of the inspection, children had just started attending the unit. The two headteachers are employed as a job share.

Almost all pupils come from White British families. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. They have a range of needs that includes moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication issues and behavioural, emotional and social needs. A few pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

The school has gained a number of awards, for example the Healthy School award and the Active Schools Mark. It has also gained recognition for its work in the outdoor environment, for example the Eco School Green Flag and the Royal Horticultural Society Campaign for School Gardening 5 Star award.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Since the last inspection, staff and governors have worked hard to maintain the tremendously high levels of care, guidance and support provided for pupils. There is a very strong focus on every aspect of the school's pastoral care that ensures that pupils and their families are extremely well supported. All staff work effectively to ensure that pupils achieve very well in their learning and develop exceptionally as mature and caring individuals. Pupils benefit from very supportive relationships with all staff and display a great deal of enthusiasm for learning. Because of the school's exceptionally strong focus on its pastoral care, pupils contribute extremely effectively to the school and wider community. This is demonstrated well through their readiness, even from the very youngest age, to be involved in how the school is run. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the school council as well as willingly taking on responsibilities such as 'friendship police' or caring for the extensive gardens, the chickens and class pets.

Pupils' achievement is excellent because the school adapts its exceptional curriculum particularly well to ensure that every individual's needs are met and all pupils fulfil their potential. This, along with outstanding teaching, enables pupils to make excellent progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage to when they leave. Children in the speech and language unit get off to an equally good start. All staff know the pupils' abilities extremely well. This is because of the highly effective checks regularly made on their progress and the considerable skill with which the school adapts and targets the well-focused support it gives individual pupils. Teachers and other adults mark pupils' work alongside them and discuss the next steps in their learning consistently and regularly. As a result, pupils have a very good understanding of what they are working on next and how to get better.

While achievement is high, the headteachers, supported particularly effectively by all staff and the governing body, are constantly looking for ways to improve pupils' attainment and personal development further. Consequently, they are leading the school's drive to raise attendance. Currently at average levels, there has been a marked improvement over the last term and persistent absence has decreased significantly. The school has been very successful in working with families to improve this situation but acknowledges that there is further work to be done. This constant striving to reflect on outstanding practice and still look for ways to improve, together with leaders' accurate self-evaluation and actions to maintain and build upon the high levels of pastoral care seen at the time of the last inspection, show the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance by:

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- ensuring that persistent absence is eradicated by working directly with specific families to reduce levels of absence for a very small number of pupils
- promoting the importance of good attendance to all pupils, parents and carers and maintaining this as a high priority across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Across the school pupils achieve extremely well in their personal and social development. Their behaviour is exemplary, both in lessons and at play, where they show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Pupils have exceptional moral and social skills, and their spiritual and cultural awareness is excellent. They are extremely considerate of each other, valuing and celebrating each other's differences. This helps to make the school very safe and welcoming. Attendance for a few pupils continues to be an area for improvement. However, pupils' considerable enjoyment in learning, ability to work really well together as a team as well as initiatives such as the highly successful Young Enterprise weeks are key factors in their extremely strong development of workplace skills. Their understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle is excellent. This is demonstrated particularly well by the enthusiasm and knowledge pupils show as they garden and prepare food daily. Pupils talk confidently about the healthy choices they make in what they eat and the benefits. They even suggest ways to cook the wide range of vegetables and fruit they produce themselves, encouraging the inspectors to try that day's 'fruit smoothie' for themselves.

Pupils also achieve extremely well academically. They are clear about their learning and frequently talk with confidence about this, sharing their ideas willingly. During a literacy session introducing captions, pupils in Year 1 were keen to talk to their partners and think up their own captions for photos taken around the school. They confidently discussed alternatives and contributed their own suggestions about how these could be improved. Pupils of all ages talk eagerly about what they have been learning and know they have targets that help them to improve. Attainment in the Year 2 national tests over the last three years has been consistently above average. Over time, pupils make outstanding progress from starting points that are below expected levels as they enter the school. The school ensures different groups and individuals, such as higher achieving pupils and those at the early stages of learning English, are very well targeted enabling them to learn effectively. Consequently, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the speech and language unit, make the same excellent progress.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Pupils' tremendous keenness to learn is due in a large part to the exceptionally innovative curriculum and consistently high quality teaching. The use of gardening and cooking in particular, as well as other activities including role play and peer massage (Massage in Schools Programme), help to bring the curriculum alive. The extremely creative links these bring between subjects help to stimulate and foster pupils' considerable interest and provide further opportunities to challenge and stretch their learning. This approach, recognised both locally and nationally through a number of awards, is exceedingly successful and valued extremely highly by pupils, parents and carers alike. All staff play their part in delivering this rich, stimulating and engaging curriculum. Some of the key features of the outstanding teaching seen across the school are: the very good relationships adults have with children; the particularly well-targeted use of highly trained additional adults both in class and in leading small groups; very effective behaviour management; and the highly effective questioning adults use to extend and challenge pupils' learning. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils of all abilities were targeted extremely well ensuring they developed their understanding of story structure very effectively. One group worked enthusiastically using drama to take on different personas and answering questions in character. Consequently, their empathy with the characters and understanding for their feelings grew rapidly. Boys and girls alike are fully engaged. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in raising standards in mathematics and

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basic skills of literacy and information and communication technology are very effectively developed also.

Pupils' welfare and personal, social and health needs are catered for extremely well because the school works exceptionally closely with parents and carers as well as outside agencies where needed. The school's exceptionally effective efforts to support their whole school community are evident in many ways. For example, their work with pupils and families who might otherwise find it difficult to access education is evident in their increased attendance. Similarly where needed, the school is very good at adopting a creative approach in order to best support its pupils and their families. Both the After School Healthy Eating Caf^e and Cooking Workshops involve parents and carers successfully in improving the diet and healthy choices pupils make. This really is a school where 'every child matters' and staff at all levels go the extra mile to make a difference.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteachers, supported exceptionally well by other leaders including the governing body, provide a clear vision for how the school can move forward. There is a tremendously positive spirit and a real team atmosphere of 'can do'. As part of the school's extremely effective development planning, leaders at all levels are positively encouraged to take on responsibilities. They are highly involved in analysing the school's results and checking teaching to see where it is most effective in order to share good practice and identify where improvements are needed. As a result, leaders have an exceptionally clear understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. Considerable efforts are made by the school to involve parents and carers in every aspect of the school's work. These extremely strong links are another of the contributory factors to the school's outstanding success. The expertise of leaders and staff is shared with other schools to help improve their effectiveness.

All staff play their part in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are rigorous, constantly checking to ensure exemplary practice is maintained across all areas. The school's promotion of equality and diversity is excellent; staff ensure that there is no discrimination between groups so that all pupils have opportunities to flourish individually and achieve exceptionally well. Leaders have been particularly effective in promoting community cohesion at school and local levels, developing close contact with other schools within the United Kingdom. Established links with a school in Nigeria have been highly successful in ensuring that pupils can engage well with others from a different country as well.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage grow quickly in confidence, becoming keen explorers and learners by the time they enter Year 1. Children make good and often rapid progress, especially in those areas where their skills are weaker, entering Year 1 with average attainment. The curriculum is adapted extremely effectively to engage and enthuse learners in all they do with a well-balanced mixture of activities led by staff and those chosen by the children themselves. Staff are particularly successful in creating rich and stimulating surroundings where the transition between learning indoors and outside is seamless, managing the layout in the Reception classes extremely well. Teaching is outstanding and the children develop rapidly in all aspects of their personal and social development. Adults are skilled at moving on children's learning through extremely good quality interventions as they play. A group of children talked animatedly about the properties of circles, squares, triangles and pentagons as a result of an adult's effective questioning. Highly effective planning ensured that the rest of the learning environment provided a wealth of other opportunities for the children to develop their understanding of shape. Staff work very well with parents and carers to ensure there are really good levels of communication and the children get off to a good start. Regular opportunities to share children's learning and achievements have been developed well to give parents and carers a real understanding of how they can help their children's development through everyday activities. Led extremely effectively by the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders, the whole team use assessment particularly well to promote learning and are able to demonstrate the good gains that children make in all areas of learning. Strong links exist between the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Pre School Speech, Language and Communication Needs Unit with children benefiting socially from regularly playing together

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with those from the Nursery. These children receive very effectively focused teaching and support resulting in the considerable progress they make during their time in the unit.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parental questionnaires were positive and most of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They commended the caring attitude of the school, the quality of teaching, the leadership and management and how much their children enjoy school. Typical comments included 'an extremely well run, happy and rounded school', 'the children are taught how to respect each other and their environment' and 'the range of opportunities for fun learning is fantastic'.

A very small minority of parents and carers reported concerns over how the school deals with disruptive behaviour, the progress their child was making and how they were informed about this. While there are occasional displays of challenging behaviour by pupils these are effectively dealt with, the impact on other learners is minimal and the management of behaviour is very good. Evidence gathered during the inspection showed that information on pupils' progress was regularly shared with parents and carers, some of whom commented positively on this aspect of the school's work in their questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stoughton Infant 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 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 264 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	76	20	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	77	17	20	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	44	52	32	38	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	60	26	31	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	59	70	20	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	61	26	31	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	70	22	26	0	0	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)	56	67	15	18	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	56	34	40	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	49	31	37	5	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	51	30	36	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	58	69	21	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	81	15	18	0	0	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.



2 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stoughton Infant School, Guilford, GU2 9ZT

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited. We were pleased to hear how much you enjoy coming to school and that your teachers plan such a lot of interesting things for you to do. You get on extremely well with one another and your behaviour around school is first rate. You have an excellent understanding of how to be safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. We agree that there are lots of interesting visitors to your school and activities to get involved in and were especially impressed with how well you look after all the gardens, chickens and animals in your care. We understand why you think the adults are very good at helping to make you feel really safe and cared for.

Your school is outstanding. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs extremely well. Teachers and other adults are very good at helping you to make excellent progress in your work. The leaders in your school run it particularly well. They know just what needs to be done to make it even better.

In order to help make your school become even better we have asked the adults at your school to work on one thing:

- work with your families to make sure you miss as little of your learning as possible.

You can help by coming to school regularly and continuing to respect each other's values, both in this school and in later life. Thank you for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead Inspector

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