

# Stamford Park Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106285
<b>Local Authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	355924
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jean Kendall HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	272
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr John Lamb
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Cathryn Downing
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Cedar Road Hale, Altrincham Cheshire WA15 9JB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Twelve lessons were observed; teachers were seen at least once. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and action plans. They took account of the 108 questionnaires returned from parents and carers, 11 returns from staff and 103 returns from pupils.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning and the extent to which work in lessons stimulates, challenges and enthuses pupils.
- The impact of curriculum developments, including the extent to which pupils are given opportunities for independent learning, whilst maintaining progress in skills across a broad range of subjects.
- How effective are safeguarding procedures, given the findings of the school's last inspection.
- Whether there is sufficient evidence to support the school's evaluation of 'outstanding' for pupils' outcomes.

## Information about the school

Stamford Park is larger than the average size junior school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, and others are from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups. A few speak English as an additional language. A lower than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities or a statement of special educational needs. The school has a number of awards including Eco Awards, Artsmark, Activemark Gold, Enhanced Healthy School status and a British Council International Award. A privately run out-of-school provision, Kool Kids', uses the school premises. This was inspected in May 2009 and the report is available on the Ofsted website.

The school was given a notice to improve in September 2009 because it had not kept up-to-date records of safeguarding checks. Other aspects of provision were found to be satisfactory. Since that inspection, four members of staff have left the school and two new teachers have joined. The roles of leaders and managers have been reviewed.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires a notice to improve. It is now providing a good standard of education.

The inspection of September 2009 required the school to ensure that safeguarding requirements are fully met, develop its contribution to community cohesion and improve the quality of teaching and curricular provision from satisfactory to good. The school has made good progress with all these areas for improvement. It has rapidly improved the quality of provision, so that teaching and the curriculum are now mostly good. It has sustained pupils' high levels of achievement and improved other pupils' outcomes so that all are now outstanding. The school has good capacity to build on the improvements and to sustain pupils' high attainment.

The restructured senior leadership team and the governing body are providing a good steer to drive through improvements. They have the full support of staff, who are ambitious for the school and determined to build on good practices. Pupils are highly motivated, with excellent attitudes to learning and a strong desire to succeed. Pupils' excellent personal attributes, combined with mostly good quality provision, create a highly positive ethos for learning. Pupils feel well cared for and extremely safe; they are happy and supportive of one another. They achieve consistently high attainment in their work and their personal development is outstanding.

Safeguarding procedures have been thoroughly reviewed and are now good. Plans to promote community cohesion have progressed well and are effectively supported by a range of partnerships within the local community and with schools in different contexts. The vast majority of parents and carers, who returned questionnaires, are pleased with their children's experience, stating for example, 'the school has provided my children with an excellent, safe, all-round education.' However, a significant minority expressed concerns that school leaders take insufficient account of their views and could do more to ensure the school provides the best quality education. School leaders and the governing body have taken some steps to improve communication but this remains an area for further development.

Revisions to the curriculum have supported staff in introducing more creative and exciting approaches to teaching and learning. Both staff and pupils are enjoying themed units of work and increased engagement in research, debate, creative and independent learning across the curriculum. The changes are at early stages and there is further work to be done to ensure pupils' skills are developed and assessed across the full range of subjects, including for example, history, geography and design and technology.

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Teaching is mostly good, supporting pupils' good progress in key areas of learning. There are some outstanding aspects which provide effective models for further improvement, and some teaching that is satisfactory. Leaders regularly observe lessons and have rightly identified that teachers are using a fuller range of teaching approaches. However, whilst monitoring records reinforce good practice, they do not give a clear indication of the quality of the lesson, nor do they identify aspects that could be improved further. Consequently, there are some missed opportunities to secure further improvement and provide professional development. Self-evaluation is largely accurate but lacks a systematic approach to ensure that findings from monitoring and pupils' progress tracking inform planning for strategic improvement.

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

- Develop monitoring and self-evaluation processes by:
  - ensuring that feedback from teaching observations gives a clear indication of the quality of the lesson and highlights aspects that could be improved
  - using information from monitoring, pupils' progress tracking and assessments, to plan for professional development and improvement at both individual and whole-school levels
  - evaluating the impact of curriculum changes and ensuring that all subjects receive full coverage and that skills are developed systematically.
- Improve communication with parents and carers so that all feel they are able to engage fully with the school, have any concerns dealt with and feel well informed about their children's progress.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Pupils enjoy learning, enthusiastically engage in activities and demonstrate excellent behaviour in lessons. The good relationships between adults and pupils contribute to a positive learning ethos throughout the school. Pupils sustain concentration and enjoy challenges, when working independently and in groups. For example in Year 6, pupils persevered with complex problems and thoroughly enjoyed working cooperatively to plan for a healthy tuck shop.

Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with higher than average overall attainment. They continue to make good progress to achieve high levels in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are effectively supported in lessons, in small groups and through specific guidance from teaching assistants. Those from minority ethnic groups make similarly good progress because their needs are well met. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in their higher than average levels of attendance and their full participation, both in lessons and in the wide range of after-school activities.

Questionnaire returns indicate that an overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that pupils are safe in school. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that instances of isolated bullying are not dealt with appropriately. However, pupils say they feel very safe because the school provides a secure environment, poor behaviour is extremely rare, and that teachers listen and act on any concerns appropriately. Their

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behaviour in lessons and around the school was exemplary during the inspection. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They are keen promoters of healthy eating and take full advantage of the wide range of physical activities, including dance, athletics, hockey, cheerleading, judo and korfbal, as well as more traditional team games.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their school and wider community. Their constructive relationships and supportive attitudes help create a cohesive, happy learning environment. They readily take responsibility as playground leaders, fund raisers, mentors and council members. The vast majority are able to share their ideas and influence improvements to facilities and the curriculum. Their opportunities to be involved in the wider community through projects, such as the SCAPE redevelopment project, traffic calming planning and a community magazine have had a positive impact on their learning and skills. They have a very well-developed understanding of cultural diversity, moral and ethical issues, which are promoted well through the curriculum and by links with schools in this country and abroad. These attributes, together with pupils' outstanding social skills and high attainment, mean that they are extremely well prepared for the next phase of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

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## How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well planned to meet pupils' different learning needs and abilities, making good use of information and communication technology (ICT). Where teaching is most effective, teachers observe and listen to pupils, providing timely prompts and questions to further their understanding. For example, in a good literacy lesson, the teacher sensitively ascertained pupils' understanding of the key features of newspapers and adapted her teaching as the lesson progressed. The marking of work includes feedback to help pupils improve and acknowledgement of what they have done well. However, procedures for marking and assessment are not fully consistent. The school recognises that assessing pupils' progress in geography, history and design and technology requires further development. Support by other adults is successfully deployed in lessons, but the role of teaching assistants, in planning, assessment and wider aspects of provision, lacks clarity. Consequently, their expertise is not always used to best effect.

Since the last inspection, the school has been developing the curriculum to make links across subjects and take account of pupils' interests and current issues. It now provides more creative opportunities which make learning interesting and values talk and respect for others. An example of this was in a good class debate about whether the Olympics should continue if a world war broke out. Curricular opportunities are enriched by extensive extra-curricular activities, including cross-country, netball and judo, and complemented by Kool Kids', a separately managed after-school club.

The school has worked hard to provide a bright and welcoming learning environment for all pupils. Displays reflect pupils' interests, successes and their links with the local and global community. Teachers provide good care, guidance and support so that pupils feel safe, valued and listened to. One pupil commented, 'If you get something wrong here, you're not shouted at, you're talked to and helped.' Much work has been done by the school to promote pupils' emotional well-being. Support for vulnerable pupils is well led and effective in meeting their needs. Links with secondary schools are well established and supportive. Liaison with the adjacent infant school supports pupils' personal development effectively but arrangements for transferring attainment data are not sufficiently developed to ensure continuity and progression in learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders, the governing body and staff have shown determination to improve provision and tackle inadequacies that were identified at the last inspection. The ambition

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to secure further improvements and to promote pupils' all-round development is shared by all. Revisions to the curriculum have provided the platform for a more creative approach to teaching and learning. Both staff and pupils are enthusiastic about the changes.

Members of the governing body have undertaken extensive training to enhance their skills. They have observed aspects of the school's work and are providing good support and challenge to ensure that weaknesses are tackled. They have reviewed safeguarding procedures and ensured that necessary improvements have been made. This has included improvements to the site following thorough health and safety audits and the updating of policies and training, with all required checks put in place. Plans to promote community cohesion have progressed well, enabling pupils to engage with a range of groups and make a good contribution to their local community. Their links with schools in other parts of England and in India, Bulgaria, Spain and Italy, enable them to share their ideas and learn from children in other contexts. The school itself is a highly cohesive community where pupils from all backgrounds and ethnic groups show respect and consideration for each other. There are good strategies in place to promote equality of opportunity, for example, in ensuring all pupils have access to enrichment activities and can contribute their ideas. All groups achieve highly and make good progress. Resources are deployed effectively to sustain pupils' outstanding achievement and highly effective all round development, indicating that the school provides excellent value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel that their children enjoy school and are happy with their children's experience. However, a significant minority expressed concerns that school leaders take insufficient account of parents' and carers' views and could do more to ensure the school provides the best



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quality education. Inspectors found that leaders have tackled the issues identified at the last inspection effectively and that teaching is mostly good. However, they agree that communication with parents and carers could be improved to ensure all feel that they can engage with the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stamford Park Junior 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 108 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 272 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	61	40	37	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	70	65	34	31	1	1	3	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	37	34	59	55	10	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	31	63	58	8	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	40	37	56	52	5	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	31	60	56	9	8	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	56	45	42	1	1	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)	42	39	46	43	14	13	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	33	56	52	10	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	36	50	46	11	10	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	30	51	47	12	11	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	34	31	41	38	17	16	5	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	42	54	50	4	4	3	3

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Stamford Park Junior School, Altrincham, WA15 9JB**

Thank you for making inspectors so welcome when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed speaking with you. We were most impressed by your high levels of motivation, excellent attitudes to learning and the outstanding contribution you make to your school. You are right to be proud of your high levels of achievement and excellent all-round personal development. You told us you feel safe and well cared for. We found that staff at Stamford Park provide good care, guidance and support and safeguarding procedures are good.

We found your school to be providing a good quality of education. School leaders and staff have fully addressed the issues identified in the last inspection. The improvements to the curriculum and teaching have added interest to your lessons. You told us you are thoroughly enjoying the increased opportunities for research and creative development. You also told us that your school offers many enrichment opportunities and we agree. We found that you make good progress and achieve highly. School leaders, the governing body and all staff are working hard to build on the improvements so that you all continue to enjoy school and achieve highly.

Most of your parents and carers are very pleased with the school but a few feel they could be better informed and would like more involvement with the school. We have asked the school to improve communication with your parents and carers.

We have also asked school leaders to develop systems to monitor the quality of provision and make sure that the changes being made continue to meet all your learning needs.

We would like to wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jean Kendall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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