

Stapleford Abbots Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114958
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	357659
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Graham Preston

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Smith
Headteacher	D J Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2008
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Telephone number	01708 688207
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Age group	5–11
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

Age group	5–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed six teachers in eleven lessons. Meetings were held with governors, groups of pupils and staff. Different aspects of the school's work were observed and documentation scrutinised, including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, as well as 56 returned questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- Does the Early Years Foundation Stage provide an effective preparation for pupils starting in Year 1?
- Does the evidence support the school's view that the great majority of pupils make satisfactory or better progress, particularly boys and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- Is teaching at least satisfactory and increasingly good aided by a focus on writing and mathematics, an improving curriculum and more rigorous tracking and target setting?
- What are the main strengths of the school's care, guidance and support that promote pupils' good behaviour and personal development and enable the school to provide effectively for the different needs of its intake?
- How effective have the senior leadership and governors been in promoting school improvement?

Information about the school

Stapleford Abbotts is a smaller than average rural primary school that draws its pupils widely from the local Essex area and nearby London boroughs. The great majority of its pupils are of White British heritage and while there is a small and increasing proportion with other ethnic and cultural backgrounds, very few speak English as an additional language. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school recently assumed responsibility for the previously privately run pre-school. The school has gained National Healthy School Status and has twice won the East of England 'Making ICT Work' competition.

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

Stapleford Abbots is a satisfactory and improving school. Its popularity is reflected in its steadily increasing size with two thirds of its pupils coming from outside its catchment area. The considerable building work, while enhancing school facilities, slowed efforts to improve standards and provision but these difficulties are now resolved.

The great majority of pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach national average standards by the time they leave Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from learning support to achieve as well as others. Pupils' progress in reading and writing has steadily improved in the last few years as a result of an effective literacy scheme. Progress in mathematics has been more variable and is being addressed through a mathematics development programme.

All pupils feel safe in school reflecting the good safeguarding procedures. Pupils treat each other with respect and are very positive about the friends they have made. They behave well in class and around the school and take an active part in school affairs through their school council and involvement in the local church and village community. Many pupils are thoughtful and articulate and readily take on responsibility. They are active in supporting and promoting various issues such as healthy lifestyles and safety. Pupils clearly like coming to school though the readiness of some parents and carers to take children out of school during term time inhibits the school's concerted efforts to achieve above average attendance rates.

The school benefits from a team of experienced and knowledgeable teachers and support staff who collaborate effectively and ensure teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Lessons are lively and interesting with good use of information and communication technology (ICT) but whole class work is not always sufficiently challenging for the more able. Much good work has been done in both English and mathematics to provide pupils with individual learning targets in their books. However, the use of these in marking work is not yet sufficiently well linked to National Curriculum levels so pupils are not always sure of their progress and what they need to do to improve. The curriculum has a number of strengths, notably in the development of literacy and ICT. The school's lack of development of community cohesion has slowed the development of pupils' appreciation of the wider British and global community. Care, guidance and support are strengths of the school both in sustaining an inclusive school environment and successfully supporting vulnerable pupils and others with specific learning needs.

The headteacher has overseen the expansion of the school and his personal style has been significant in establishing a caring and supportive school. There is a shared commitment by all staff to school improvement reflected in effective tracking of pupils' progress and the introduction of different strategies to improve it. The school recognises that it does not accurately assess children's knowledge and skills when they enter Year 1.

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The school is accurate in its evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, although senior and middle leaders have yet to fully develop their skills in evaluating the quality of pupils' learning. The governing body is playing a more active role in the strategic development of the school. Governors are attached to different areas and regularly monitor provision. The commitment and work of the headteacher, governing body and staff have resulted in a steady rise in outcomes and the school is well placed to build on these improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress by:
 - providing more varied challenge that meets the needs of all, including the more able, when introducing and developing new knowledge and skills
 - explicitly linking pupils' learning targets to National Curriculum levels used in the school's tracking so that pupils have clearer goals for improvement.
- Fully implement the school's strategy for community cohesion by:
 - Providing, within the currently developing curriculum, more opportunities for pupils to understand and appreciate the wider British society
 - developing links with schools and agencies in other areas in Britain and elsewhere.
- Develop senior and middle leadership expertise by:
 - training and involvement in the evaluation of teaching and learning
 - developing assessment skills, particularly in order to establish accurate baseline judgements in Year 1.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be 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 enter Year 1 with broadly average knowledge and skills. Progress in the next two years is in line with expectations for reading and writing though fewer pupils reach the higher standards in mathematics. Progress continues to be satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 most pupils reach the national average. There is some fluctuation in results so that while progress in reading and writing in 2010 was at least satisfactory and often good, progress for girls in mathematics fell significantly. The school mathematics strategy is addressing this with some success. In a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson girls, in particular, showed considerable aptitude in working with imperial and metric measures and accurately measuring perimeters and areas of different shapes and were on target to reach the higher Level 5. At the same time a small group of less confident pupils, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefited from carefully targeted learning support enabling them to make good progress in reaching Level 3.

Pupils like school and behave well. They get on well with each other and their teachers and readily take on responsibility. They fully subscribe to healthy lifestyles with the great majority eating the healthy school meals and participating actively and successfully in the different sports. The school council meets regularly with governors and is actively

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campaigning for traffic-calming measures and speed restrictions outside the school on what is a busy country road. Pupils demonstrate a good spiritual awareness, evident in an assembly on Remembrance Day and have good moral and social skills although cultural awareness is less developed.

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?

Teachers and support staff work closely as a team illustrated by the school's approach to teaching early reading skills in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 where pupils are placed in mixed age groups according to their development. Staff relationships with pupils are positive and lessons are interesting and purposeful. Although whole class work is not sufficiently challenging for all, the follow on group work is usually well planned and varied to meet different pupils' needs. The best practice is beginning to have a positive impact, particularly in English where increasing numbers are making better than expected progress. The literacy programme is proving successful in raising standards and the school has also introduced an appropriate mathematics strategy to improve pupils' numeracy. Current work is going on to develop a curriculum that provides more interest and challenge. The school has a good reputation with parents, carers and the surrounding local authorities for its work with vulnerable children. This is helped by a headteacher who chooses to be directly responsible for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and is actively involved in their support. Now that the school manages the

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adjoining pre-school, work is in hand to better prepare children for entry to Reception. The school also has well developed sports and curriculum links with a number of local schools to help prepare Year 6 pupils for their move into secondary education.

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, staff and governing body worked together to maintain the working of the school during considerable building work and are now focused on improving the quality of provision and pupils' progress. Safeguarding is good with the secure school site monitored by closed circuit television. The governing body has made a concerted effort to be more closely involved in monitoring and supporting pupils' learning in the different years with most governors undergoing training in school strategic planning. Good procedures are well used to track and monitor the progress of groups and individuals and target additional support and ensure all groups of pupils achieve appropriately. The use of more structured writing opportunities and engaging content is helping to better involve boys and narrow the gap in the quality of boys' and girls' writing. The school engages well with parents and carers, providing daily opportunities to meet staff at the end of the day, regular reviews of pupils' progress and effective use of ICT to maintain contact. Parents and carers are positive about the school, reflected in the number of parents and carers applying to be governors and the large and increasing proportion of pupils entering the school from outside the area. Given the school draws its pupils from three or more local authorities, it maintains close working relationships with the different social agencies in each authority reflected in the good support for the needs of all its pupils. Given the school's rural location it has been successful in developing strong links with local groups including the church and local parish. The school has audited its provision for community cohesion and made some improvements to its curriculum, but it has been slow in developing wider links to help pupils better appreciate the wider British society.

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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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

Children start in the Reception class with general communication skills below age-related expectations. Almost all pupils come from the adjoining pre-school. Progress in the Reception class is good, especially in communication, language and literacy. Both progress and outcomes are also strong in personal and social education because of the school's focus on developing relationships and getting children to take on responsibility for small tasks and routines. Children behave well and understand the importance of health, safety and hygiene. Most children are inquisitive, active learners and enjoy being in school. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in activities, well supported by skilled support staff so they make good progress.

Adults are well deployed and the learning areas are well equipped and attractive. Careful attention is given to planning provision based on observation and assessment of children's progress. For example, a more able Reception child was placed in a higher literacy group alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader provides a strong lead in developing the learning and resources with positive effect. Assessment practice has improved and is considerably more realistic with more carefully planned opportunities for children to develop other areas of learning including knowledge of the world. Now that the school has responsibility for the pre-school, the leader spends some of her time there and works directly with the staff to improve the learning opportunities including those for literacy.

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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

Parents and carers are generally very positive about the school with few issues. A small number have concerns about behaviour management and others are a little less positive about being kept informed about their child's progress and other matters. The inspectors found behaviour to be consistently good. Pupils are understanding and supportive of the very few pupils with personal and social issues who occasionally require prompt, extra support. With regard to keeping parents and carers informed, the school uses various effective means such as 'parentmail', especially given the widely dispersed intake. However, inspectors feel that this could be helped if the school more regularly makes explicit pupils' progress against National Curriculum standards.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stapleford Abbots 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 123 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	71	16	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	64	20	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	32	35	63	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	45	28	50	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	52	27	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	36	35	63	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	45	31	55	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)	20	36	33	59	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	41	31	55	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	30	33	59	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	20	40	71	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	43	29	52	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	57	24	43	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.



12 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stapleford Abbots Primary School, Romford, RM4 1EJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We found it gives you a satisfactory education, and ensures that most of you achieve average standards by the time you leave. It was good to see that the building work in the school has given you a new hall and an extra new classroom.

You told us the school is a very safe place to be and we were pleased to see how well behaved you are and how you work well together in lessons. Many of you said that you made friends very quickly and the way you treat each other with respect is good. You also have a good commitment to healthy eating. Many of you are involved in different sports and other activities after school.

Many of your parents and carers told us how much you like school so we were a little surprised that the school has struggled to achieve a good attendance rate. You clearly get on with your teachers and they plan different activities that make your learning interesting. Many of you also get valuable extra help from learning support staff. We could see in your books that your teachers give you learning targets and we have asked the school to make it clearer to you how those learning targets help you improve your National Curriculum levels. The school is keen for you to know more about the wider world. To help in this we have asked them to develop wider links including those with other schools in Britain and possibly abroad.

The headteacher, the governing body and all the staff are working to further improve your school and we have asked the school to enable more staff take a lead in school improvement. You can all help the school and your own progress by attending regularly and taking an active part in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Graham Preston

Lead inspector

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