

Stockton Heath Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110996
Local Authority	Warrington
Inspection number	356845
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Rachel Brougham
Headteacher	Mrs Lynda Carnes
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited 16 lessons or parts of lessons. The inspectors observed 12 teachers and held discussions with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 87 responses to parents' and carers' questionnaires were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of the significant disruption to leadership and staffing on school performance.
- Whether pupils make sufficient progress in Key Stage 2.
- How consistently teachers use assessment information to set next steps in learning for individual pupils, especially those who are more-able.
- How effectively leaders at all levels are involved in promoting school improvement.

Information about the school

Stockton Heath is a larger than the average-size primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities is also below average, although the number with a statement of special educational needs is relatively high. This is because the school hosts specially resourced provision for a maximum of ten pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). The on-site Nursery provision is not managed by the school and is inspected separately. The school has gained the Activemark and has accredited Healthy School status.

There has been significant disruption to staffing, including to senior leadership positions, since September 2010. Year 6 pupils were on a residential visit during the inspection.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The disruption to staffing, including to the senior leadership team, from the start of the academic year has had a detrimental impact on the school's performance. It has resulted in a lack of clear leadership to drive improvement. Most leadership and management responsibilities have been held by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In their absence, other members of staff have been unable to take on such responsibilities because of a lack of expertise and training. Consequently, until recently, there has been no monitoring or evaluation of teaching and learning or performance management of the staff. The school's data previously indicated that a significant number of pupils in Key Stage 2 were underachieving in writing and mathematics. Actions to bring about improvement have been ineffective and this underachievement remains. Self-evaluation lacks rigour and does not provide an accurate picture of the school's performance. This makes it difficult for the correct areas for development to be identified and plans put into place to take the school forward. Pupils in the designated unit have found the disruption very unsettling. This has led to extremes of poor behaviour that have raised concerns about the safety of pupils and staff in the unit. For too many pupils in the unit poor behaviour and rudeness are all too common.

The deputy headteacher has recently returned to school and has taken on the responsibility of acting headteacher. Working in partnership with the acting deputy headteacher, she has quickly taken action to improve matters, such as clarifying senior leadership roles and starting lesson observations to support staff in developing their expertise further. In their questionnaires, staff commented that morale was now rising and they felt the school was beginning to move forward. Nevertheless, leadership and management remain fragile. The situation has highlighted that there is too little delegation of responsibility to staff for promoting school improvement. Consequently, the capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

Children make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, this good progress is not maintained throughout the rest of the school. The school's assessment data indicate that by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics. In most years this represents inadequate achievement from their skill levels on entering school, which are above those typical for their age. This stems from inconsistencies in teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teachers do not use assessment information consistently to set work that effectively

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challenges different groups, especially the more-able. They do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not use marking consistently to guide pupils to the next specific steps in learning. Pupils in the designated unit make inadequate progress because staff lack the expertise to meet their specific individual needs.

The curriculum is extended by a variety of enrichment experiences, including extra-curricular activities. However, the curriculum is inadequate because it has significant shortcomings in meeting the needs of pupils and providing them with an adequate preparation for the next stage of their lives. This is particularly so in Key Stage 2 and in the designated unit. Care and support systems overall are inadequate; consequently, too many pupils do not thrive in their learning or in their personal development. In the main school, safeguarding procedures are robust with all regulations and duties being met. This is not the case in the designated unit where strategies and procedures relating to pupils' behaviour are not effective in ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff. The school has a generally positive relationship with parents and carers and keeps them up-to-date about the main events in its calendar.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - using information about the progress of different groups effectively to set challenging targets for improvement
 - making staff accountable for the progress pupils make
 - ensuring all staff provide work that builds on pupils' prior learning in order to improve their achievement.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring teachers use assessment information consistently to set work that effectively challenges different groups, especially the more-able
 - improving feedback and marking so that pupils are clear about the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - delegating leadership and management responsibilities among staff and ensuring that all leaders are fully involved in promoting school improvement
 - ensuring self-evaluation is accurate and provides a firm basis for long-term planning for improvement
 - rigorously monitoring teaching and learning to provide a clear picture of their quality throughout the school.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils in the designated unit by:
 - developing and embedding robust procedures for managing behaviour so that pupils and staff are safe at all times and learning can proceed without distractions.
- Improve provision and pupils' progress in the designated unit by:

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- improving the expertise of staff in meeting the specific needs of individual pupils
- ensuring that ongoing assessments of individual pupil's progress are rigorous so that specific next steps in learning can be set.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Achievement is inadequate because a significant number of pupils are not making sufficient progress in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities. Nevertheless, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and collaborate well to complete tasks. They carry out activities diligently and persevere when faced with difficulties. Pupils enjoy their work, as seen in an English lesson about the use of suffixes. Their enthusiasm was evident when Year 2 pupils were making a variety of facial expressions to match the word provided, such as beautiful and sorrowful. Pupils speak clearly and read fluently and expressively. They enjoy writing but lack expertise in writing at length across the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils have secure calculation and quick mental recall skills. They are, however, not proficient in applying these skills to solve real-life number problems. Pupils in the designated unit do not make sufficient progress because staff do not effectively take account of the individual ways they prefer to learn.

Pupils enhance school life by taking on a variety of responsibilities, including being a member of the school council. They also make a useful contribution to the wider community, such as their involvement in raising funds for local and national charities. Pupils know they need to eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise in order to stay healthy. They have a secure understanding of what might be an unsafe situation and say they feel safe and secure in school. Pupils' behaviour in the main school is good but, in the designated unit, too many pupils find difficulty in acting responsibly and too often their behaviour is unacceptable. Consequently, this inadequate behaviour inhibits the progress they make in their learning and impacts negatively on their general well-being. Pupils have a sound understanding of the traditions and beliefs of cultures different to their own. They are willing to listen to and appreciate the views of others. The underachievement of significant numbers of pupils in Key Stage 2 and in the designated unit means they are not developing sufficient skills and understanding to ensure they are adequately prepared for their future lives.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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 manage classrooms well so that little time is lost. They have secure subject knowledge and are able to explain new ideas clearly. Questioning is used successfully to find out what pupils know and can do, and to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teaching is, however, inadequate because teachers do not use assessment information consistently to provide suitably challenging work for different groups of pupils, especially the more-able. Feedback and marking are not used consistently to guide pupils to improve their work. A lack of high expectation of what pupils can achieve means they are not being stretched sufficiently to fulfil their capabilities. These deficiencies are mainly in Key Stage 2 but are also evident in Key Stage 1. In the designated unit, staff do not match learning tasks to pupils' individual needs.

The curriculum is inadequate. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to refine and extend their writing skills by writing at length across subjects. The curriculum for mathematics does not place enough emphasis on developing pupils' skills in solving number problems in a variety of real-life contexts. In the designated unit, the curriculum is not planned effectively to meet the needs of individual pupils. Nevertheless, the curriculum successfully promotes pupils' adoption of a healthy lifestyle, as reflected in the Activemark award and Healthy School accreditation. The programme for personal and social development contributes well to pupils' progress in this aspect of their learning. A wide

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range of educational visits, including to Chester Zoo and Norton Priory, and opportunities to work with visitors, enhance pupils' skills and widen their experiences.

The school provides a welcoming setting in which to learn. All staff know the procedures to follow if they have concerns regarding the well-being of a pupil. Pupils who have medical needs are looked after effectively to ensure their welfare. However, systems for the care and support of pupils have deficiencies so that some groups of pupils do not thrive in their learning. In the designated unit, the quality of advice and guidance is weak so pupils are not sufficiently prepared for their future lives. Consequently, the effectiveness of care, guidance and support is inadequate.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The key weakness in leadership and management is the lack of delegated responsibility amongst staff in promoting school improvement. This has resulted in the school being unable to move forward in the absence of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Senior leaders have been unclear about their specific roles and have not been fully involved in tackling weaknesses and securing improvement. Self-evaluation lacks accuracy and makes it difficult for leaders to set challenging targets for improvement. The lack of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning means that leaders do not have a clear view of its quality and are unable to hold teachers to account for the progress that pupils make.

The governing body is supportive of the school but has too little impact on its direction and work. The promotion of equality of opportunity is inadequate. Leaders have had data about the progress of different groups that has shown significant underachievement, particularly in Key Stage 2 and the designated unit. They have failed to take sufficient action to remedy the situation and this underachievement remains. The arrangements and policies for safeguarding in the main school meet requirements and are systematically reviewed. In the designated unit however, the strategies and procedures for ensuring the safeguarding and well-being of pupils and staff, particularly in relation to pupils' behaviour, are inadequate.

Leaders have not been able to deal effectively with the shortcomings in meeting the needs of pupils and providing them with an adequate preparation for the next stage of their lives. This is particularly so in Key Stage 2 and in the designated unit.

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Leaders promote community cohesion satisfactorily within the school and local community. The school is working to strengthen this aspect of its work by developing links with a range of groups beyond the immediate community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress and achieve well because teaching is consistently good. Adults work well together to provide a variety of interesting activities that make learning fun. The good balance between activities that are led by adults and those initiated by children makes a positive contribution to their development as independent learners. At times, staff miss opportunities to intervene in independent activities to enhance learning, such as in further developing children's speaking skills.

Children behave well and show enjoyment in their learning. This was evident when they were using a range of resources to design and make a variety of insects, as part of learning about the natural world.

Relationships are good and children learn within a very friendly and welcoming setting. They work and play well together in pairs and small groups, taking turns and sharing equipment fairly. The curriculum is effectively enhanced by opportunities for children to take part in a variety of visits, including to the local post office. Good leadership makes sure that welfare arrangements are thorough, with all necessary steps being taken to ensure children's safety and well-being. The well-organised and resourced outdoor area is used effectively to promote children's learning throughout the day. Relationships with parents and carers are positive and they are kept regularly informed about their child's progress. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and make a significant contribution to the progress that children make.

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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:	2
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 proportion of parents and carers returning completed questionnaires was less than usually received. Most were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two comments were typical, 'My child is very happy at this school.' and 'I have found staff approachable and professional.' There was no significant trend of negative views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stockton Heath 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 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 339 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	75	21	24	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	75	19	22	3	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	62	28	32	3	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	62	26	30	6	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	58	67	25	29	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	67	24	28	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	63	28	32	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)	51	59	28	32	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	67	25	29	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	51	37	43	0	0	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	57	31	36	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	48	39	45	5	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	69	22	25	2	2	1	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



22 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stockton Heath Primary School, Warrington, WA4 6HX

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the interesting things you do.

While we found some ways that your learning could be improved, the things we found to be strengths of your school are that:

- many of you enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning
- children in the Reception classes achieve well
- you know how to stay safe and live a healthy lifestyle.

However, we judged that many of you could be doing better, especially in Key Stage 2. As a result, we have decided that your school needs some help, which is called 'special measures'. This means that other inspectors will visit your school to see the extent to which improvements are being made.

We have asked the governors to improve the way the school's leaders work so that they can make important changes. These include:

- improving the quality of teaching and learning
- ensuring that staff in the unit help pupils to behave well and make better progress in their work
- improving how well you develop your writing and mathematics skills, particularly in Key Stage 2.

You can all help the school to improve further by continuing to try your best.

Yours sincerely,

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector

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