

Staleydene Preparatory School

Dukinfield Methodist Church, Dukinfield, Cheshire, SK16 4LE

Inspection dates

5–7 November 2013

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

1

Pupils' achievement

Outstanding

1

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

1

Quality of teaching

Outstanding

1

Quality of curriculum

Outstanding

1

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Good

2

Leadership and management

Outstanding

1

Summary of key findings

This school is outstanding because

- Pupils achieve exceptionally well and make outstanding progress because teaching is outstanding and the curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets their needs.
- Behaviour is outstanding; pupils are exceptionally studious and are always fully engaged in lessons. They are responsible, courteous and very well-mannered.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. The school is outstanding in the ways that it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They feel very safe in school.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The drive and ambition of senior leaders has ensured that pupils achieve exceptionally well and make consistently outstanding progress.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with a day's notice.
- The inspector observed nine lessons taught by two different teachers. The inspector looked at pupils' work and held meetings with the headteacher, teachers and pupils.
- The inspector looked at the school's documentation including schemes of work, teachers' planning, records of pupils' progress and assessment records. He checked the school's compliance with the regulations for independent schools.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed in two questionnaires returned by staff and seven letters provided by parents and carers.

Inspection team

Chanan Tomlin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Staleydene Preparatory School is a non-selective day school, registered for up to 46 boys and girls aged from three to 11 years. It opened in 2002 and moved to its current premises at Dukinfield Methodist Church, Tameside, in January 2012.
- The school uses a large classroom for the Early Years Foundation Stage and a medium-sized classroom for Key Stage 2. The school has secured access to another medium-sized room to provide a third classroom when necessary. The church hall is used for school assemblies and physical education (PE) and an adjacent grassed area is used for outdoor learning and play.
- Currently, there are 10 pupils on roll; four in the Early Years Foundation Stage and six in Key Stage 2. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has no particular religious affiliation. It aims to provide a friendly, family atmosphere in which pupils can learn effectively, develop strong foundations in basic skills and attain high academic standards.
- The school's last full inspection was in March 2010. A progress monitoring visit took place in September 2012 during which all regulations were found to be met.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review policy documents related to welfare, health and safety more frequently to ensure that they are always up-to-date in line with current legislation and guidance.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Outstanding

Achievement is outstanding due to outstanding teaching and an excellent curriculum. Pupils join the Early Years Foundation Stage with average to above-average abilities. Taking account of their starting points, all pupils make at least expected progress and most exceed this over time. Standards in reading for all pupils far exceed national averages. The school sets literacy and numeracy targets for all pupils that are higher than established national targets. Assessments and tracking systems for writing and mathematics show that all pupils make at least the expected progress and most exceed this and make excellent progress. Marking and test results for all other subjects, including science, indicate that pupils achieve exceedingly well and make outstanding progress.

Currently, there are no disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, or those that are looked after by the local authority. However, records show that such pupils have made rapid and sustained progress in most areas of their learning in the past given their starting points and capabilities. Pupils that are very capable are challenged suitably and attain standards far above national standards; achievement for these pupils is exceptional for their ages.

Pupils learn exceptionally well; they acquire knowledge quickly and rapidly develop their understanding in a wide range of subjects. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are eager to attend and make exceptionally good progress in all areas of learning. All pupils develop and apply a wide range of skills such as reading, writing, mathematics and communication with great competence resulting in them being exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils play a dynamic role in their learning; they offer ideas, ask pertinent questions and often initiate discussions and debates. Pupils respond to challenges with great enthusiasm; they show high levels of independence and are consistently interested and engaged in their studies.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

Pupils' behaviour and personal development is outstanding. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Lessons always proceed without disruption. Pupils are enthusiastic and always fully engaged; they concentrate and apply themselves to tasks set during lessons volunteering ideas readily and working well together. Pupils consider their actions carefully, are keen to achieve high standards and apply themselves to their studies with zeal. As a result, they take the initiative, achieve outstanding results and thrive in the school environment. Pupils interact well with each other; often older pupils help younger ones, for example during dinner and outdoor play. Parents and carers praise staff highly for providing a warm welcoming environment for their children. One parent commented 'Children develop excellent relationships with staff and have friends that become like family!' Instances of bullying are very rare. Through their good attitudes and behaviour, pupils help to create an environment where bullying is not tolerated. Pupils feel safe at all times; they understand what constitutes unsafe situations and are vigilant in keeping themselves and others safe. Attendance is excellent and the school day and lessons start punctually.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. Pupils are always encouraged to succeed in what they are good at and to contribute to the school community. For example, older pupils help younger ones with their coats before break times and pupils set the tables and serve dinner. Pupils perform in public, for instance when they sing Christmas carols at charity events. As a result, they grow in self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils say grace before eating and learn to appreciate spirituality through religious education (RE), art, music and during assemblies. An example seen during the inspection was a whole-school assembly

where pupils discussed the biblical characters Jonah and Noah with an emphasis on being good people in the eyes of God. The school places great emphasis on good moral values and socially acceptable behaviour. The impact of this is evident in pupils' exceptional manners and the kindness that they show to each other during group activities.

Pupils learn about their own culture and public services through citizenship and history. They learn about political issues in a balanced way; as a result, they learn to make reasoned, balanced decisions and are well-prepared for life in British society. They appreciate the homely atmosphere in this small school and consider themselves part of one family that help and care for each other. Pupils learn about other cultures through history, geography and RE. For example, the Early Years Foundation Stage classroom has displays titled 'Around the World' and 'We are all the Same' that help pupils understand and appreciate diversity and equality. In the past, pupils have visited places of worship and people have visited the school to speak about their own culture, but not recently. The school appreciates the importance of these activities and plans more in the near future.

Quality of teaching

Outstanding

Teaching is outstanding; the impact of this is that all pupils achieve exceptionally well and make rapid and sustained progress. Teachers convey consistently high expectations to pupils. They plan lessons very well to match age and ability enabling pupils to learn exceptionally well in all areas of the curriculum. Throughout lessons, teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding, intervening when necessary and providing effective support. As a result, the quality of learning is high and all pupils are consistently challenged according to their age and ability. Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught very effectively. These subjects are planned cohesively and these basic skills are developed very well in all subjects ensuring that pupils receive a well-rounded education with firm grounding in all of these important areas. Five pupils aged seven and eight years recently won a national writing competition; a great accomplishment considering the small size of this school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers assist young children to become very effective learners through covering many areas of learning in single activities.

Teachers generate high levels of participation in lessons and have created a purposeful environment where pupils are highly committed to learning. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses; planning allows for continuity and progression over time ensuring that all pupils are challenged appropriately and enabled to make excellent progress. Support for pupils is sharply focused to match their needs accurately. Work is marked regularly; marking and constant feedback highlights pupils' achievements and gives them clear guidance on the areas that they need to improve. In Key Stage 2, pupils have 'Target Books' in which they are given regular targets that they are expected to achieve; this helps them maintain focus ensuring that they make rapid sustained progress in their learning. Pupils are tested regularly and teachers have established very good systems to monitor and track achievement and progress. As a result, pupils are routinely challenged to achieve high standards. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and to help each other by sharing insights into their learning. Teachers in Key Stage 2 are introducing a system for pupils to assess each others' work so that they can share ideas, and compare and improve their work.

The school sees academic learning as a priority and lessons are usually formal, enabling pupils to cover large quantities of work in short spans of time. Notwithstanding this, teachers use a wide range of teaching methods and resources to support their lessons. Examples of this seen during the inspection were in an art lesson where pupils created their own sarcophagi in connection with a history topic on ancient Egypt. During this lesson, pupils suggested that they use information contained in a classroom display to inform their art work. Similarly, whilst playing a 'Treasure Island' game with their teacher, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage practised counting, and developed their literacy and communication skills effectively. During the inspection, one pupil noted that 'teachers are enthusiastic!' another said that 'learning is good fun' and 'we learn more here than in other schools!'

Quality of curriculum**Outstanding**

The curriculum is outstanding and provides highly positive memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning. It meets the needs of all pupils fully and enables them to achieve exceedingly well and make excellent progress in all subjects. The curriculum enables pupils to develop their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills to exceptionally high standards. It is supported with very detailed planning and schemes of work for all subjects that indicate clear progression and how all pupils are to be challenged, including the most able and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage meets their needs exceptionally well enabling them to gain an excellent grounding in all of the areas of learning. Educational programmes for young children are exceptionally well organised, providing them with a rich variety of stimulating experiences that captivate their interest and provide them with an excellent basis to enable them to succeed in Key Stage 1.

During personal, social and health education (PSHE), citizenship lessons and the many discussions that take place connected to the subjects being taught, pupils receive valuable advice on how to make important decisions. As a result, they become well-rounded individuals who are knowledgeable about a wide range of issues and are well-prepared for their futures. Despite its small size, the school provides art, gym and homework clubs after school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these clubs and most attend regularly. The school also organises a 'Booster Class' to help pupils surpass their learning targets even more quickly. Pupils go on educational visits to museums, parks and a farm; they are also rewarded with trips to theme parks for excellent achievement and behaviour.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety**Good**

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good and all of the independent school standards are met. The school has established robust policies and procedures that are in keeping with current legislation and guidance and are implemented effectively including the policy to tackle any bullying. During this inspection, a small number of minor omissions in some policies were found; these were brought to the attention of leadership and management and were rectified immediately. Policy documents are reviewed regularly but should be reviewed even more frequently to ensure that they are always fully up-to-date.

Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and are regularly reviewed. The school implements its child protection policy effectively. All staff and proprietors have received enhanced clearances through the Disclosure and Barring Service to work with children; these and all other required checks are included in a single central register. The designated person for child protection and all staff have attended the required training at the required levels. Arrangements for the recruitment of new staff are robust; during induction, new staff receive clear guidance on child protection procedures and on how to keep pupils safe at all times.

Staff are committed to providing high levels of care and support and are competent in promoting pupils' health and safety. They undertake a good range of training related to health and safety and one member of staff is trained in paediatric first aid. The school has a good level of fire safety. It has addressed issues highlighted in a letter from the fire authority dated 16 January 2012 effectively by producing a detailed fire risk assessment, and ensured that equipment is checked and serviced regularly. Fire drills are conducted at least every term and are recorded appropriately. Risk assessments for the premises and trips are comprehensive. Supervision is consistently good and arrangements are in place to ensure that all pupils, including the youngest and most vulnerable, are always safe.

The school works well with parents, carers and other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe. Parents and carers unanimously agree that the school provides high standards of care. One

parent/carer commented 'The school is a very nurturing environment for my child. He settled in with no worries, is happy, plays, has friends and loves the teaching staff'. Pupils all agree that they feel safe and well cared for at all times and that bullying is extremely rare. Staff promote excellent behaviour in school and on school trips; as a result, the atmosphere is exceptionally calm, purposeful and conducive to learning. Pupils learn about nutrition and healthy lifestyles through PSHE and science. The school provides nutritious meals and encourages pupils to bring healthy snacks. As a result, pupils develop good attitudes towards their personal health and are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Leadership and management are outstanding. Senior leaders are highly successful in their drive to ensure that activities meet the needs of pupils exceptionally well and to maintain exceptionally high levels of achievement for pupils of all abilities over a sustained period of time. Leaders and managers have high ambitions for pupils; they expect pupils to attain high standards in their learning and convey this to them consistently. This action contributes to an excellent learning environment where pupils achieve exceedingly well and make excellent progress. School leaders have a clear understanding of pupils' skills and abilities and the school's strengths and areas that need to improve. They are, therefore, able to plan and take actions to improve the provision as necessary. Senior leaders and teachers uphold high professional standards and frequently introduce new initiatives to benefit pupils. Staff and pupils are courteous to each other and an atmosphere of mutual respect permeates the school.

Senior leaders have produced excellent policies which ensure that pupils achieve high levels of literacy. They place great emphasis on improving teaching and learning through encouraging, challenging and supporting teachers to perfect the methods that they use to teach and the ways that they use school resources. As a result, teaching is outstanding and pupils achieve high standards and make excellent progress. Leaders have produced a curriculum that provides pupils with memorable experiences and excellent opportunities for high-quality learning; this has a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour and personal development and the high standards that they achieve. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This has a highly positive effect on pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence and the ways that they relate to people that are different to them.

The premises and accommodation are well-suited to support the provision of the curriculum. All areas of the school are well-maintained and decorated to a good standard. The school meets all of the requirements with regard to the provision of information to parents and carers and the complaints procedure also meets requirements. Senior leaders work extremely well with parents, carers and other agencies to help pupils thrive in the school environment and achieve very high standards of learning. They have ensured that arrangements for safeguarding are robust and fully meet statutory requirements. Resources are used very well to benefit all groups of pupils.

School leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	133564
Inspection number	420208
DfE registration number	357/6055

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Preparatory school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Number of part time pupils	1
Proprietor	Mr Edwin Ogbogu and Mrs Michele Ogbogu
Headteacher	Miss Kirsty Best
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,900
Telephone number	07904 693 660
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