



Staveley Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112627
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278978
Inspection dates 31 October 2005 to 1 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Glynn Storer LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	College Avenue
School category	Community		S43 3XE
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01246 472 325
Number on roll	148	Fax number	01246 472 325
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. John Williams
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Heather Ellis

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small junior school serves the community of Staveley, Middlecroft, near Chesterfield. Almost all pupils are from White British families. A few are from mixed heritage or minority ethnic backgrounds and virtually all speak English as their main language. This is a community where levels of social and economic disadvantage are high. Numbers on roll are falling and almost half of all pupils are entitled to free school meals. Many pupils enter the school with knowledge and skills that are well below average for their age. During the last school year, the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities was broadly average, although the number who needed intensive help with their learning was higher than that in other schools of this size. Several changes in leadership, along with frequent staff absence, have posed barriers to improvement in recent years, although the school is now in a phase of greater stability.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Inspectors agree with the school's view that its overall effectiveness is good. It has improved rapidly in recent years and now has some outstanding features. Because teaching and the curriculum are good, pupils of all abilities make good progress and for some pupils, progress is excellent. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are also higher than they were, although pupils would benefit from more opportunities to use computers as an aid to learning all subjects. Most pupils enjoy school because teachers provide exciting activities that promote effective learning and prepare them well for life in the community. Pupils' behaviour has improved considerably and staff provide outstanding care for all, but especially the school's most needy pupils. As a result, most parents support the school's efforts. However, a minority of parents do not send their children to school regularly enough. Consequently, attendance is below that of other schools and this adversely affects the progress of some pupils. The headteacher provides good leadership. Senior staff know how good the school is because systems for evaluating the school's work are effective. However, governors are not sufficiently involved in this process. The school has dealt systematically with the issues raised by the previous inspection but, although the school is well placed to make further improvements, current planning does not take enough account of parents' views. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that governors collect more first hand information about the school's performance
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use computers and other devices to improve the quality of their learning in other subjects
- Take more account of parents' views when planning for school improvement
- Seek further ways of improving the attendance of pupils for whom regular absence is a barrier to progress

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that most pupils make good progress. Almost all attain and many exceed the challenging targets that the school sets for them. The results of the national tests in 2005 indicate that standards in English were broadly average. Nevertheless, in relation to their below average attainment on entry, pupils made good progress. However, standards in mathematics and science were well above average. Almost all pupils attained the expected standard for their age and about half attained the above average level. This represents outstanding progress. The school's many lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties or disabilities did exceptionally well to attain the expected standard for their age. Many pupils of below average attainment on entry also made very good progress to achieve the above average standard. Standards in the current Year 6 are unlikely to be quite as high, because attainment on entry was even lower in 2002. Despite this apparent drop in

standards, pupils continue to make good overall progress and for many, progress is very good, particularly in mathematics and science. Standards in ICT have improved considerably since the previous inspection and are now broadly in line with national expectations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and are keen to succeed. Almost all behave well and try their best in lessons. Relationships are good. At lunchtimes, pupils enjoy skipping and bat and ball games with teaching assistants, who keep them involved and active. They feel safe at school because bullying is rare. However, despite the school's best efforts, attendance levels remain unsatisfactory. The school is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand one another's feelings, get on well together and contribute successfully to their school and the wider community. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility. They regularly assist with assemblies, bell ringing, collecting registers and running the school library. They appreciate having a 'voice' in school life via the school council which has made many sensible suggestions for improvements. Pupils are well prepared for life as young adults. They understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. They talk of their need to eat fruit and vegetables daily and enjoy the many physical activities that the school offers. Older pupils gain insights into the world of work by participating in the annual Enterprise Fayre.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Inspectors find that teaching and learning are good, even though the school evaluated this aspect of its work as satisfactory. However, the quality of teaching and learning is not always of a consistent standard throughout the school. In all classes, teachers and other adults get on well with the pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn. Teachers plan interesting, practical activities that help pupils to remember what they have been taught. Support staff work very well alongside teachers, especially when they help pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The support provided by teaching assistants is a key factor in the good progress that most pupils make. In the best lessons, such as that in which pupils in Year 4 learned how to write simple ICT programs to control the 'screen turtle', teachers use searching questions to make pupils think more carefully. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response, and their skilful class management ensures that pupils are attentive and do their best. Most lessons proceed at a good pace but in a minority of lessons, teachers do not make the best use of time. In these lessons, pupils do not cover as much ground as they could. Teachers use a good range of systems for measuring and tracking pupils' progress. They use assessment information effectively to set targets and to direct additional help to individuals or groups within the class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it is practical and interesting. Pupils have said that they prefer to learn through practical activities and the school has successfully responded to their wishes. Staff and pupils have also been involved in a highly effective programme which has raised standards in literacy and numeracy. The school has improved its ICT provision but pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their computer skills in other subjects. The school day has recently been reorganised to allow more time for physical education, thereby underlining the school's strong commitment to health promotion. The school's most able pupils benefit intellectually and socially from a stimulating range of activities with other children, as part of a local project for gifted and talented pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified quickly and receive good support which ensures they achieve well. A wide variety of clubs, visits and visitors brings learning to life and sustains pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy French, table tennis, choir, recorders and computer clubs. Special events, such as the Safety Crew Project and the Life Education Bus make learning about personal safety exciting and relevant. In addition, the school has introduced a breakfast club, which means that all pupils have a good start to the school day.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Inspectors feel that the school has been too modest when evaluating this aspect of its work. Standards of care are outstanding. Staff know pupils very well and are extremely quick to respond to any worries they have. They are highly successful in providing a secure, happy and caring environment. Consequently, pupils are confident that there is always someone to turn to if they have any problems or concerns. The school works very closely with agencies, such as social services, to ensure that pupils in difficult circumstances receive all the support that they need. Learning mentors work tirelessly to 'nip' any potential problem 'in the bud', thereby ensuring that all pupils enjoy and are successful at school. Parents and pupils appreciate the fact that the mentors, headteacher and staff are in the playground every morning to listen to problems and resolve conflicts. This ensures that pupils from troubled home backgrounds get the best possible start to the day and that pupils feel very safe and free from bullying in school. Child protection arrangements are very thorough and quickly instigated if necessary. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are fully included in all that the school has to offer. They receive the support that they need to overcome their difficulties and to achieve well alongside other pupils. Staff monitor pupils' progress carefully and give them good advice on how to improve their work. Consequently, they achieve well and reach challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good leadership. Since her appointment, she has taken effective steps to improve behaviour throughout the school, introduced a systematic approach to checking standards and quality, and provided training to enable others with management responsibilities to do a good job. Consequently, staff morale has improved and there is a renewed sense of purpose and team spirit amongst staff. The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively and, as a result, pupils with different capabilities do equally well. Arrangements for school self-evaluation are good. Most procedures for checking on the school's performance are thorough. Staff willingly accept the frequent monitoring that takes place because they know that it supports their professional development and maintains the drive to raise standards. Governors receive detailed briefings from the headteacher and from other staff, but they do not gather enough first-hand information to both support and challenge staff effectively. Furthermore, the school has not sought the views of parents when drawing up the current improvement plan. Nevertheless, the school is committed to improving its performance and its track record in this respect is good. Staff have successfully dealt with most issues arising from its previous inspection. The on-going training of staff with management responsibilities puts the school in a very good position to improve further. The school budget includes a higher than normal carry-forward. This is intended to safeguard staffing levels as pupil numbers decline and, in the light of current standards, represents good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

You may remember that we, the inspectors, visited your school a little while ago. Thank you for making our visit so enjoyable, and for taking the time to talk to us and to answer our questions. We thought you would like to hear our findings. We think that your school is good because: - you work hard at your reading and writing and do particularly well in maths and science - you really enjoy school because your teachers make lessons interesting - you get on very well with one another and are keen to learn - there are many interesting clubs that you can attend after school - your teachers and support staff help you when you have difficulties or problems and make sure that you are safe - Mrs Ellis and the teachers work hard to make the school a better place. Even though your school is good, there are some things that could be even better. We have asked your teachers to make sure that: - governors are invited to come into school more often to check on how well you are doing - you have more time to work on the computers during lessons - they listen to your parents' views when deciding how to make the school even better - everybody works hard to improve the attendance of pupils who are away from school too often.