



Stockton-on-the-Forest Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121360
LEA York
Inspection number 280996
Inspection dates 11 January 2006 to 12 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Lesley Clark CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Village
School category	Community		Stockton-on-the-Forest
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		York, North Yorkshire YO32 9UP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01904 400366
Number on roll	86	Fax number	01904 400366
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Paul Hudson
Date of previous inspection	18 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Jane Nellar

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 11 January 2006 - 12 January 2006	Inspection number 280996
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small village school on the outskirts of York. Approximately 30% of pupils come from outside the local community. The children come from advantaged socio-economic circumstances. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. When children start school their attainment, though varying from year to year, is generally above average. Most of the children of Reception age had started school less than a week before this inspection. There has been considerable disruption to staffing throughout the past four years. Last year, the school received the National Association of Advisers for Computers in Education Award, the Artsmark Silver Award and the Healthy Schools Award and also received Investors in People for the second time.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school gives its pupils a satisfactory academic education with good provision for their personal development through a good and enjoyable curriculum, judgements that match the school's view of itself. Pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, work and play together constructively. They enjoy coming to school and their behaviour and attendance are good. The leadership and management of the school are good. In particular, the headteacher's management has done much to reduce the negative impact of unavoidable short-term staffing arrangements. Parents think well of the education provided. Standards at the end of Year 6 depend on the mix of pupils each year but are generally above average. While pupils make satisfactory progress overall, more able pupils underachieve in Years 1 to 4 because teachers underestimate what they can do. Teaching is satisfactory on balance. There are weaknesses in teachers' assessment of pupils' learning and in the involvement of pupils in checking their work against challenging targets, and some pupils contentedly repeat mistakes. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall despite some weaknesses in the teaching. Pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and are included well in all aspects of school life. The provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is good. Governance is good and the skills of individual governors are used well to assist the school. The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection and has the capacity to improve further now that most staffing issues have been addressed. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise teachers' expectations of what more able pupils in Years 1 to 4 can achieve and involve pupils in checking their work against challenging targets.
- Develop assessment procedures so that teachers use the information when they plan lessons to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' different ages and abilities.
- Improve the quality of teaching of children in the Foundation Stage in order to accelerate their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter school with advanced personal, social, language, literacy and communication skills which enable them to learn together constructively and independently. Their achievement is satisfactory, despite the limited range of imaginative and thought-provoking activities, and standards are above average by the end of the year. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve the standard expected based on their levels of attainment on entry to school. Progress is uneven. More able pupils in Years 1 and 2 underachieve and results in national tests show a slight

downward trend, with results in 2005 being below average in reading and mathematics and close to average in writing. The picture is similar in the current Year 2.

Underachievement of more able pupils continues in Years 3 to 4 because the work is not well matched to different ability and age groups. Achievement is good in Years 5 and 6 because of better teaching which means that pupils of all abilities have to think and work hard. The 2005 test results at the end of Year 6 confirm pupils' above average performance in English but closer to average performance in mathematics because they have some gaps in their knowledge. Results in science are generally good, reflecting the impact of 'science weeks' and effective learning in the final two years. Targets are usually met.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are nurtured well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good and they have good opportunities to learn about other cultures through links with a school in Sri Lanka, for example. Pupils thrive in the school's inclusive atmosphere, growing increasingly articulate and confident. They like the 'Sorry Box', explaining that 'if you think you have been a bit unkind you can send a sorry note'. An outstanding feature is the way every child is on a committee, ranging from the 'mini-enterprise committee' to the 'travel plan committee' which was instrumental in getting speed bumps for the school drive. This regular commitment gives pupils a well developed sense of responsibility for their age as well as economic awareness. Parents say that 'the children have a strong voice in the school. They are listened to and feel important'.

Attendance is good because pupils like coming to school. They like 'Active Time' on Fridays when they play games such as golf or tennis after lunch. They are well aware of the benefits of healthy living and the 'Healthy Schools committee' took part in organising a healthy school week. Pupils have relaxed attitudes to lessons. They should be more involved in assessing their own learning and in striving for high achievement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory on balance. Pupils behave well because they like their teachers and have good relationships with them. They concentrate fairly well but in Years 1 to 4 more able pupils listen with half an ear and still do the work comfortably. There are marked differences in the Year 5/6 class, where pupils are fired up by the teaching, work at a good pace, ask questions and really try their hardest, rising to the challenge of work well matched to their varying needs and levels of attainment. Where teaching is less strong, low expectations combined with poor questioning skills contribute to a slow pace of learning and underachievement. Assessment is not used sufficiently well to guide what to teach

next or to challenge the more able. Pupils are unclear what they need to do to improve their work and tend to repeat mistakes. While children in the Foundation Stage have frequent opportunities to learn through independent play, the activities are not sufficiently well planned to provide imaginative and stimulating learning, despite good resources both indoors and out. In part, this is a consequence of recent staffing difficulties. Already, the steps to improve the provision are having a positive impact. An exceptional feature throughout the school is the well organised, high quality support for pupils from teaching assistants. This has provided a measure of stability and has helped maintain satisfactory learning when staffing has changed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides enjoyable learning opportunities and a good balance of activities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and a satisfactory range for Foundation Stage children. It is better than the school thinks. It is well planned to give time to developing skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) as well as other subjects. A special week each term, dedicated to a specific subject, brings interest and diversity to pupils' learning. Pupils talked enthusiastically about keeping a daily diary of healthy activities during one such week. Strong emphasis is given to personal, social and emotional development and to citizenship. An outstanding feature is the inclusion of all pupils in fortnightly 'committee meetings' which alternate with 'sharing assemblies' thus giving pupils a strong voice in their school. The curriculum is enriched further by a wide range of educational visits and visitors to school. Pupils are offered an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities which they talk about with great enthusiasm.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, support and guidance for pupils are good. Child protection procedures are thorough. The headteacher leads the good care of all pupils, including those who are looked after and vulnerable. The school values its community and parents comment on how fully they feel included. Pupils feel secure because of the friendly and supportive atmosphere in school. The tracking of pupils' progress clearly charts satisfactory development over time for individuals and groups of pupils and has highlighted some underachievement. Parents praise the support that their children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive, commenting, for example, on adults' sensitivity to their personal and emotional needs. The school council supports the needs of pupils and, as a result of their suggestions, skipping and other clubs run at lunchtimes contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, although the school modestly judged these aspects as satisfactory. There are considerable strengths in the leadership of the headteacher. Issues from the last inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily and in many respects the school is much better than it was. The recent library and ICT suite have boosted pupils' attainment and the extensively developed outdoor area provides an invaluable resource for imaginative learning for Foundation Stage children and creative learning for older pupils. The curriculum has been developed very well in respect of providing enjoyable learning. Frequent and unavoidable staff changes, however, have caused considerable setbacks in the planned developments for the school. These have been dealt with well so as to minimise disruption to pupils' learning but at the cost of the headteacher taking on a substantial teaching commitment this year as a short-term measure. This limits the time available to work alongside inexperienced staff. The headteacher's monitoring and evaluation is stringent and accurate, showing clearly why there are areas of underachievement and what needs to be done to raise standards further. Current staffing issues have been identified and tackled sensibly with effective support in place to ensure satisfactory learning. In particular, the use of teaching assistants is proving highly effective. It is too soon, however, to see the full impact of recent strategies. The governing body, under new chairmanship, is actively involved in the school and is ably steering its direction and improvement. Financial management is good. The headteacher has gained the respect of parents and information from the returns of parental questionnaires was extremely positive. The school has the capacity to improve further.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	2	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?	3	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?	2	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for being so friendly and helpful. I really enjoyed my visit and want to share with you what I thought about your school.

What I liked most about your school.

- I think that you have lots of opportunities to take responsibility and to help make decisions about important things when you meet in your committees once a fortnight.
- I am delighted that you all get on so well together and I am pleased that you behave well and attend school so regularly.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What I have asked your school to do now.

- I think that some of you find the work a bit too easy and so I have asked your teachers to set you more challenging work that suits your age and interests.
- I think your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and I think that you could do a bit more to help them by checking your mistakes and seeing if you have met the targets they set you.

I liked talking to you and watching you learn and wish you well for the future.