



Stanley (Crook) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114059
Local Authority Durham
Inspection number 289795
Inspection dates 1–2 March 2007
Reporting inspector Brian Dower

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wooley Terrace
School category	Community		Stanley, Crook
Age range of pupils	4–11		County Durham, DL15 9AN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01388 762858
Number on roll (school)	82	Fax number	01388 762858
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Cllr Trevor Carroll
		Headteacher	Mrs Shirley Oswald
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 1–2 March 2007	Inspection number 289795
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Stanley Crook is a small rural school, which serves an area of social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average, as is the percentage of boys and girls with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils are of White British heritage and are taught in four mixed age classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stanley Crook Primary is a good school with outstanding features. The inclusive nature of the school and its commitment to equality of opportunity for every child are exemplary. The care and support provided for vulnerable pupils and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are outstanding. The rigour of the assessment systems and the effectiveness of measures to tackle weaknesses are excellent. The school recognises that the challenge now is to develop pupils' ability to use their basic skills flexibly in a variety of contexts.

Parents are supportive of the school and speak highly of the welcoming and family atmosphere where their children feel known and valued. This is particularly evident in the Reception year where children settle quickly and progress is very good. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and free from any form of bullying. They are confident that their welfare and safety come first. They adopt healthy lifestyles to stay fit and well. Pupils contribute in many ways to the local community, mainly through fund raising activities and charitable work. The school's mission statement exhorts everyone to 'Try our best, to tell the truth, to look after each other and the community'. They do.

Standards are average and progress and achievement are good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are vulnerable receive the support they need and also progress well. Standards have risen over the last three years and the school's assessment systems show that the improving trend is being maintained. Pupils' personal development is good, as is their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Behaviour in class and around school is excellent, as are pupils' attitudes to their work and their consideration for each other. Attendance rates are broadly average and the school is doing all it can to improve the figures. Teaching and learning are good. The adaptation of learning activities to meet the diverse needs of the mixed age and ability groups is a strength in the teaching. The excellent tracking of pupils' progress enables teachers to spot underachievement quickly and take effective action to remedy weaknesses. Pupils know how well they are doing. They understand their learning targets and what they must do to improve.

Curriculum provision is good and pupils speak highly of the enjoyment they get from the extra-curricular activities, the visits out of school and the visitors who come to speak to them. There have been good improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in higher standards of work and improved outdoor provision for the younger children. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and she has the support of able and diligent teachers and support staff. They have made the school into a good example of how to meet the academic and personal needs of every boy and girl. The school is strongly placed to raise standards further because of the effective teamwork of the staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' ability to apply their basic skills across all areas of the curriculum by providing opportunities to write accurately and at length in different contexts and to use calculations to solve practical problems.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children join the school with attainment that is well below average. They make very good progress in the Reception year, especially in speech and language and in personal and social development. Most reach the early learning goals by the start of Year 1. Attainment in 2006 at the end of Year 2 was a little below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Over time, such standards have varied because of the differing ability profiles of the intakes. Results in 2006 at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science were average. Results in one year's national tests should be interpreted with caution because of the small number of pupils involved. Trends over time, however, are a useful indicator of how well the school is doing. There has been a significant improvement in standards over three years, from the well below average results in 2004. The greatest improvement has been in science. Progress and achievement are good for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school's rigorous and efficient assessment procedures show that standards continue to rise and that progress remains good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Significant progress has been made since the previous inspection in providing pupils with multi-cultural experiences and so increasing their understanding of society's diversity. Behaviour is excellent in class and around school and pupils report that there is no bullying. As a result, they feel safe and secure and work and play well together. They know there is always an adult they can turn to if they have problems. There are opportunities for the older pupils to look after the younger members of the school and they do this responsibly. Pupils are involved in local community events and do much to raise money for charity. They enjoy coming to school and attendance rates are broadly average; the school works hard to improve them. One reason that depresses the attendance figures is family holidays taken in term time.

Pupils make their views known and influence the school's development through the work of the school council. Pupils are aware of what they must and must not do to stay fit and well and they adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils have the personal qualities to make a success of their lives but they are limited in their ability to use their basic literacy and numeracy skills flexibly and in a variety of contexts.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils work hard and are keen to do well. They are inquisitive and often suggest ways to improve the way they learn. The phrase, 'Can we do this in our lessons?' is frequently heard. They work well collaboratively and so learn from each other. Teaching is consistently good. Working relationships throughout the school are excellent and adults are knowledgeable and sensitive to every pupil's needs. The learning atmosphere in classrooms is routinely excellent. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils but temper this with a supportive and caring approach in the classroom. Their lesson planning makes provision for the different age and ability levels in each of the four classes and learning activities are varied and structured to get the best from every pupil. Good use of questions establishes that pupils understand their work but there is inconsistency in the use of whole class discussions and debates to challenge preconceptions and insular thinking. The school is very well served by the teaching assistants who make a major contribution to improving standards. Marking and assessments are done well and show pupils where they are in their work and what they must do to get better. Clear learning targets are set for improvement and pupils are encouraged to monitor their own progress. Computer technology is used effectively for teaching and as an aid for learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with all the required subjects taught to all age groups. National strategies and guidelines are used well to ensure that learning is steadily built upon year by year. Pupils enjoy their work because the teachers develop the fun aspect of the curriculum and because there are many opportunities for them to extend that enjoyment outside of the curriculum. A wide range of outings is provided and after school activities and clubs are varied and well attended. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection in the outdoor facilities for the Reception year. The provision for these children's physical and creative development is very good. Very good links exist with other schools and outside agencies and the many visitors to the school have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school has identified the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills across all subjects as a development priority.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This aspect of the school's work is outstanding because of the very high quality of care and support each pupil receives. The emotional, social and learning needs of every child are understood by all who work in the school and those needs are met. Parents are appreciative of the guidance and care extended to their children. Procedures for

safeguarding pupils, including child protection measures and risk assessments, are well established and undertaken rigorously. Extremely effective systems track pupils' standards, progress and personal development. Pupils confirm that they understand the levels they are working at and know what they need to do to improve. Assessment procedures trigger extra help or alternative strategies where they are needed. Hence, vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are supported very well and enabled to make the same good progress as others. Parents are well informed about what their children are learning and the progress they are making.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and she is well supported by her deputy and by the teachers and their assistants who are able and committed to the pupils' welfare and progress. This effective team approach has led to stability and loyalty in the teaching and support staff. The small number of staff leads to management decisions being collaborative. This results in a consistent approach to change, which has a positive impact on standards. The school's self-evaluation procedures are effective and produce an accurate picture of what is working well and what needs attention. Every child makes good progress because all who work in the school are committed to equality of opportunity. The inclusive nature of the school is outstanding. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and play a full part in planning its development. The school has identified the leadership of the wider curriculum as an area for development. The school is well staffed. There is an appropriate range of good quality resources to support pupils' learning and they are used well to secure good value for money. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection and the school's capacity to improve further is good.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Stanley (Crook) Primary School

Wooley Terrace

Stanley

Crook

County Durham

DL15 9AN

1 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the welcome you extended to me during my recent visit and the time many of you gave to talk to me about your school. I enjoyed my short stay and only wished I had more time to see all the creative and interesting activities you are involved in.

Stanley Crook Primary is a good school with outstanding features. Everything is done to ensure that you make good progress and enjoy your work and play. All who work in the school are sensitive to your needs and committed to making you feel safe, secure and cared for. You impressed me with your courtesy and hard work and the way you work well together. You are confident young people and take full advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits.

You have many qualities to be proud of. Your behaviour is excellent and you show consideration for others. The older pupils help the younger children and you all do what you can to support boys or girls who have learning or physical difficulties. You are very sensitive to the needs of vulnerable pupils and you make them feel part of your friendly community.

You have done well in improving your basic literacy and numeracy skills. What you are not so good at is using those skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. Your teachers are aware of these difficulties and will be working with you to improve the situation.

Thank you again for showing your school off to me. I wish you all every success!

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower

Inspector