



Stock Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115120
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290139
Inspection date 9 February 2007
Reporting inspector Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Swan Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Stock, Ingatestone
Age range of pupils	4-11		Essex CM4 9BQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01277 840265
Number on roll (school)	195	Fax number	01277 840587
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr R Swanston
		Headteacher	Mr G J Slide
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

This is a below average size village primary school. About half the pupils come from the village, with others coming from surrounding towns, mainly Billericay. The majority of pupils are from White British. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils are from a mix of economic backgrounds and the number entitled to free school meals is low. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is about one third of the national average, though increasing each year. Children's attainment on entry is slightly above the standards expected, particularly in the area of personal, social and emotional development.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stock C of E Primary School has gone through a turbulent time in the past few years due to a number of changes in headship. Since his appointment in 2005, the headteacher has brought stability and a clear vision to maintain and build on the school's many successes. His leadership and management are good. Working in partnership with the local authority and governors he has, for example, effectively restructured the school's leadership organisation. This is effective because it focuses on different age groups of pupils. The school has good capacity for further improvement. Teachers take their responsibilities seriously, although some are hampered by having too little opportunity to check pupils' progress across the school. As a result, there are some inconsistencies in teaching and learning, particularly in teachers' planning. However, both teaching and learning and the curriculum are good and make a positive contribution to the pupils' achievement. Overall, the school has good systems in place for monitoring how well it is doing and it has an accurate understanding of where improvements need to be made. The school is effective and provides good value for money.

There is a positive atmosphere of support and care that leads parents to suggest rightly that the school provides a safe environment in which their children learn. More than this, the strong teamwork amongst all the adults, including governors, leads to a calm and purposeful ethos in which pupils make good progress both academically and socially. As one parent stated, 'The teachers have created a climate that is stretching and still supportive.' Another said, 'The school has a wonderful family atmosphere.' The inspection confirms these views. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. From a good start in the Foundation Stage class, children settle well, learn happily together, enjoy school and develop confidence. By the time that they enter Year 1, almost all pupils meet the expected goals and a majority significantly exceed them. Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is excellent. The pupils love school and have very positive attitudes to learning. This is reflected in the good levels of attendance.

Pupils also make good progress in their academic development because the curriculum is good. Achievement is good throughout the school. As a result, in four of the past five years, standards have been significantly above average in English, mathematics and science in the national tests for 11 year olds. In the 2006 national tests for Year 6 pupils, standards were only slightly above average. These results were anticipated because that year group had a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. The current Year 6 pupils are on course to attain standards that are well above average in English and mathematics, and most already meet the expected Level 4 for pupils at the end of Year 6, with almost a third achieving the higher Level 5. In science, pupils' progress is slightly less speedy because, as yet, teachers do not systematically check the pupils' progress in their science skills as they move through the school. Nonetheless, Year 6 pupils are on course to reach above average standards in science.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency in teachers' planning by providing more opportunities for teachers to check provision in the areas for which they are responsible.
- Quicken progress in science by ensuring that pupils' progress is monitored and pupils are provided with clear guidance for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Provision in the Foundation Stage is effective and children make good progress. They continue to progress well in Key Stage 1, where the standards attained have been above average or better over a long period of time. This good progress continues through the four junior years. Results in Key Stage 2 national tests have been significantly above the national average in four of the past five years. The 2006 results were limited by the smaller than usual number of pupils that gained the higher Level 5. The school has successfully put support into place to address this, particularly in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress towards their targets because of the good quality provision.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour is outstanding and pupils are happy and view their school as a place for learning and enjoyment. One pupil commented, 'It's fun to learn and meet our friends.' Parents rightly have confidence in the school's ability to care for their children and help them develop socially and emotionally, as well as academically. Pupils accept and benefit from the increasing diversity of abilities and backgrounds in school, and are respectful towards each other and to adults. The school is a harmonious community and the promotion of respect and tolerance amongst its pupils reflects the strong Christian ethos of the school. This also supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is good. Pupils have a strong appreciation of their own well-being, having a clear understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They thrive because of the many opportunities to take responsibility in the school and in class councils. Pupils help younger children by being play leaders and acting as house and sports captains. In addition, they are proud of their money-making efforts for local and national charities. Pupils are well equipped with the skills needed for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Staff and pupils treat each other with respect and consideration. The teachers' good relationships and positive behaviour management supports pupils' good achievement. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations and skilled guidance. Generally, teachers provide interesting and challenging activities that provide the opportunity for all to achieve well. There are some inconsistencies in teachers' planning. On occasion, some planned activities are too broad and do not match the differing learning needs of all pupils. This limits pupils' progress, particularly in science.

Pupils work hard and use the opportunities for small group work well, often discussing issues in a thoughtful manner. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson in which pupils were learning about persuasive writing, pupils identified some key aspects of the style being studied after seeing a clip from the previous evening's television debate. Pupils showed a mature appreciation of different views and had good understanding of points expressed. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress due to the careful assessments made and the provision of suitably adapted learning materials combined with the support by skilled support staff.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good: it meets all requirements and the needs of the full range of pupils. A good start has been made on placing more emphasis on developing English and information and communication technology (ICT) skills within other subjects. This contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of lessons. Staff also ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. This helps to make topics studied more relevant and meaningful. In addition, the curriculum is enlivened by focus opportunities, such as the healthy minds and bodies theme of last term, which the pupils said they thoroughly enjoyed. A wide range of activities enriches the curriculum, as do the links with the local community. Visits to places of interest and the frequent visitors to the school help pupils to develop their understanding of the wider world. The pupils' enthusiasm is seen in their commitment to activities outside lessons, mainly focusing on sports and the arts.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has made very considerable improvements in pupils' care, guidance and support since the previous inspection, and they are now good. The school provides excellent care and support for pupils. Regular health and safety checks help to ensure pupils are safe and secure, and child protection arrangements are robust. The school's improvement focus to develop pupils' independence in learning is paying dividends.

Pupils receive clear guidance in English and mathematics. They know their targets well and how to improve in most subjects, although this is not the case in science. Here, teachers do not check pupils' progress in science skills sufficiently well to enable pupils to make good progress throughout the school. Marking of pupils' work provides clear guidance on how well they have succeeded and in most cases, informs them how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Since his appointment, the headteacher has steered the school skilfully through all the necessary changes. Consequently, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. There is a strong sense of teamwork that is an important factor in the school's success. The headteacher ensures that all staff are included in the important decisions about improvement projects and all have an opportunity to contribute to the good quality development plan.

Governors too play an important role. There were significant weaknesses in governance at the time of the previous inspection. Governors are directly involved in the strategic leadership of the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Although the school has good arrangements in place to check how well it is doing, some teachers with responsibilities are not given enough opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. In consequence, there are some inconsistencies in teachers' planning.

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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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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?	2

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	2
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

15 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Stock Church of England Primary School, Swan Lane, Stock, Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 9BQ

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed meeting you all. You told me how much you enjoy school, love lessons and learning and that you think that yours is a good school. I agree! Here are some of the main things that I found.

- Your teachers work hard to make sure that your lessons are fun and that you learn well.
- You make good progress in all classes and achieve well.
- The adults make sure that there are many interesting things to do in addition to your normal lessons, such as after school clubs and lots of visitors and visits outside school.
- Your behaviour is excellent and I was impressed by the way that you take responsibility and care for each other.
- Mr Slide is a good headteacher. He makes sure that the school runs smoothly and that everyone works together to make your school successful.

I have asked the staff to do two things.

- Quicken your progress in science by ensuring that it is checked and you are provided with clear guidance for improvement.
- Make sure that your teachers' lesson plans are consistently good, by giving teachers who are responsible for subjects more opportunities to see other lessons.

You can help to make the school continue to be successful by working hard and meeting the targets set for you.

With best wishes

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector