



Staverton Church of England Voluntary Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122029
Local Authority Northamptonshire
Inspection number 292296
Inspection date 9 October 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Glebe Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Staverton
Age range of pupils	4-11		NN11 6JF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01327 703154
Number on roll (school)	80	Fax number	01327 703154
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	A Scott
		Headteacher	T Nelson
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Although this small primary school is situated in the village of Staverton, about three-quarters of the pupils come from the nearby town of Daventry. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There are fewer pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities than in most schools. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Reception class varies from year to year but is slightly above average overall.

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 where pupils achieve well. Pupils are justifiably proud of their school and the way it enables them to become responsible citizens. High quality personal and academic support helps pupils to become eager and happy learners. Pupils behave well and are confident and articulate. They especially enjoy the very many interesting activities that the school provides outside lessons. Projects such as 'The Funky Free Rangers' egg business give pupils an outstanding understanding of the world of commerce and finance. Pupils learn to eat healthily and develop a good awareness of how to stay safe. They take an active part in village events. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Good teaching in the Reception class helps children to make good progress from their starting points. By the start of Year 1, most children are comfortably meeting or exceeding the expected levels for their age. Pupils continue to make good progress in the rest of the school. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average overall in English, mathematics and science, although test results in writing lag behind those of other subjects. In most lessons, teachers plan carefully to meet differing needs and they make very good use of information about how well pupils are doing to identify those that need extra help. Skilled teaching assistants give very good support, especially when they are working with small groups of pupils. However, in writing, teachers do not always expect enough of pupils and this slows the pace at which skills improve.

The reflective and purposeful leadership of the headteacher has helped the school to improve considerably over the last three years. All members of staff share the headteacher's commitment to ensuring that pupils fulfil their potential. This is reflected in every aspect of school life, but especially in the way that pupils are expected to take responsibility and to help each other. There is a good understanding of what still needs to be done, although governors are over-reliant on the headteacher for information and are insufficiently involved in school development planning. This makes it difficult for them to hold the school to account. Parents are very supportive of the school and they make a significant contribution to its success by supporting their children's learning at home. They are kept very well informed through an outstanding school website and they rightly feel that the school is teaching their children the skills and values that will help them succeed in their later life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Involve governors more in school improvement planning so that they can do more to hold the school to account.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. By the end of the Reception year, standards are above those found nationally, with particular strengths in physical development where children benefit from easy access to a well resourced outdoor area. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average overall in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make especially good progress in reading and develop a wide range of skills. However, in writing, pupils make only satisfactory progress and standards are consistently lower than in other subjects. In writing, pupils do not always present their work neatly enough and they make careless spelling and punctuation errors. In information and communication technology (ICT), older pupils have good skills because of the many opportunities that they get to work on computers both in and out of lessons. Pupils confidently find information on the internet and they access information about their own learning from the school website.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Children settle into the Reception class quickly and are polite and confident. In all classes, the pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their exceptionally good attendance. One pupil said 'I like coming to school because everyone is really friendly'. Pupils behave well in and around the school and most listen well in class. However, some pupils in Years 1 find it difficult to concentrate when not being supported by an adult, slowing the pace of learning, and a few older pupils do not take enough care with their written work.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are very good at taking responsibility. They run their own egg business and they write reports for the local paper as well as taking responsibility for recycling paper and food waste. These activities make an outstanding contribution towards the pupils' preparation for the world of work. Pupils have a good understanding about healthy and safe living. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 know why the diet of rich Tudors was bad for their teeth and vital organs. Younger pupils explain that they 'eat fruit because it is good for them'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. In the Reception class, children are given clear instructions and good individual support by the teacher and teaching assistant in learning sounds and letters, enabling them to learn new skills quickly. Throughout the school, teachers have good relationships with the pupils and use resources purposefully. Teaching assistants support small groups so that differing needs are met well.

Information and communication technology, such as the 'bee bots' and the interactive whiteboards, is greatly appreciated by the pupils and helps to make learning interesting. In most lessons, teachers ensure that work builds well on what pupils already know. Teachers ask challenging questions when working with small groups of pupils, encouraging them to think for themselves. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations for pupils' writing and sometimes learning slows when pupils are working independently, especially when they are expected to write.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school has recently made changes in the way literacy is being taught to engage the interest of boys more effectively. A more cross-curricular approach is boosting the pupils' knowledge of topics such as 'The Tudors' and 'The Planets'. However, the school acknowledges that more needs to be done to ensure that basic writing skills are always being given sufficient attention. Modern technology is used well to support pupils' learning. For example, in the Reception class, children enjoy using the interactive whiteboard to add small numbers together. In Years 3 to 6, pupils regularly practise key number and reading skills on computers. Over the last year, this has helped to raise standards. The school provides an outstanding range of additional learning opportunities through clubs, visits and visitors. For example, artists frequently visit the school to teach new skills and as a result this aspect of the pupils' creativity is especially well developed. Links with the local rugby and football teams help to promote healthy living and give pupils good opportunities to learn new skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides exceptionally good care, guidance and support for all its pupils. The school successfully places the personal care of its pupils at the centre of its work. All pupils are treated as part of the 'school family'; members of staff know the pupils well. They work very closely with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure and they know what to do if they have a worry. Children are well supported when they first start school in the Reception class, enabling them to settle very quickly. Their progress is monitored very carefully in all areas of learning. Similarly, in Years 1 to 6, pupils' progress is tracked very thoroughly. Pupils are set challenging individual targets that are particularly well understood by the older pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties are swiftly identified and they are provided with good additional support. All pupils have computer access to some of their test results and achievement records so that they are fully involved in monitoring their own progress, helping them to understand what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Leadership is strongly focused on raising standards and over the last three years weaknesses have been tackled rigorously. The school's recent track record of development and the commitment and drive of senior managers mean that there is a good capacity for further improvement. There are good systems for monitoring school effectiveness. In this small school, responsibilities are sensibly shared between staff. All members of staff are involved in reviewing the school's work and parents and pupils' views are also carefully considered. The school has embraced modern technology as a means of tracking pupils' progress and this information is used effectively to check that all are doing well enough. Consequently, there is a good understanding of what is working well and what needs improving. The school has rightly identified the need to make sure that pupils do as well in writing as in other subjects. Recent initiatives, such as giving pupils more opportunities to write purposefully, have not been in place long enough to have yet had a significant effect on the quality of writing. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and have successfully managed recent building development which has significantly improved facilities. However, they have rightly identified that they do not do enough to find out things for themselves. This makes it difficult for them to hold the school to account or to take a more active role in planning for school improvement.

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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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

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	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	3
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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school in such a polite and friendly way and for showing us your work. We are pleased that you come to such a good school. We would like to give a particular thank you to the school councillors who showed us around the school. You helped us a lot. We enjoyed the eggs you sold us and hope that 'The Funky Free Rangers' business continues to be successful.

What your school does best

- Good teaching helps you to learn well.
- Your behaviour is good and you enjoy school and all the activities that teachers provide for you.
- All adults in school are very kind and caring and they give you very good support when you are struggling with your work.
- You make good use of computers in lessons.
- You take responsibility well and learn about managing a budget.
- Your headteacher and teachers are working hard to make the school even better.
- Your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Help you to do better in writing by making sure that your work is always hard enough.
- Involve governors more in finding out how well the school is doing and planning for developments.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and by taking good care with your writing.