

Edgar Stammers Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130153
Local Authority	Walsall
Inspection number	293609
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Tom Shine

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Gelsthorpe-Smith
Headteacher	Lee Regan
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Harden Road Leamore Walsall WS3 1RQ
Telephone number	01922 471390
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school that opened in January 2006 following the amalgamation of the formerly separate Infant and Junior schools on the same site. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. A significant feature of the school is its provision for Family Learning which encourages parents to visit the school more frequently to take part in various activities to enable them to take a more active part in their children's learning. The school is part of the National Healthy Breakfast Day Scheme and provides breakfast before school and also during the mid-morning break.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school whose effectiveness is satisfactory. The school went through a difficult period during the amalgamation that adversely affected standards particularly in Year 6 in 2006. Since then, the amalgamation has progressed well because of the strong leadership of the headteacher and his senior staff. The headteacher provides good leadership although leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The management of several of the main subjects is relatively new, and teachers are still developing their roles in monitoring teachers' planning and the quality of pupils' work. A number of effective initiatives, including a good tracking system to check on pupils' progress, have been introduced. These ensure the school has an adequate appreciation of its strengths and weaknesses and a satisfactory capacity to improve. The quality of teaching is improving and, although satisfactory overall, is good in some key year areas. However, this quality is not constant enough throughout the school to enable pupils to make consistently good progress. Standards are improving and are broadly average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. However, in several classes, teachers' planning does not always ensure that the work set is matched adequately to the needs of all the pupils, particularly the more able. Consequently, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is particularly well led. These pupils receive good levels of support and, as a result, make good progress. In the Foundation Stage, where teaching and learning are good, children enjoy a wide range of interesting experiences. Good levels of adult support are focused on developing their communication, mathematical and social skills. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory with strengths in the care and support pupils are given. This very much reflects the headteacher's stated aim 'to make the school a haven of safety and security to enable effective learning to take place'. A behaviour improvement programme has been very successful in ensuring that the school operates as a well ordered community. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They say there is now no bullying, when previously there was, 'because we have peer support.' The school places high value on promoting pupils' personal development and well-being which are good. The school's good curriculum includes a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities and, as a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and all the other activities the school has to offer. When Year 6 pupils were asked what they would miss most when they transfer to secondary school, one pupil immediately replied, 'the school itself and the teachers!'

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers' planning meets the needs of all groups of pupils, by setting work that is suitably challenging, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Develop subject leaders' roles so that they are fully effective in raising standards by monitoring teachers' planning and the quality of pupils' work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and progress are satisfactory by the time pupils leave Year 6. When children join the school in the Nursery, their abilities are below average and very low in speaking and listening, mathematical and personal and social development. Although they make good progress and achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes, their attainment is still below average in these areas by the time they enter Year 1. The outcomes of the national assessments at the

end of Year 2 in 2006 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Current standards are improving. They are now broadly average and pupils are achieving well. The results of the 2006 tests for 11-year-olds were exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science. Although achievements for pupils in Years 3 to 5 are satisfactory, the present Year 6 pupils are making good progress in all three subjects and most are working at broadly average standards. This is as a result of good teaching in these classes and an intensive booster programme to help pupils to make up lost ground in their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support and because of this they make good progress. Throughout most of the rest of the school, more able pupils do not consistently make the progress expected of them, as teaching does not always challenge them enough. Pupils' developing skills in literacy and numeracy prepare them adequately for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are beginning to develop a good sense of cultural diversity, particularly in their awareness of the needs of children in third world countries, as well as a sense of social awareness. They have developed a good awareness of others in worse positions than themselves and have been very involved in fundraising, for example, for Children in Need and Comic Relief. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and make a good contribution to the life of the school and the community. They have respect for their teachers and for other members of staff and say that 'lessons are interesting'. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their attendance, which has improved and is broadly in line with the national average. The school council is thoroughly involved in making improvements to the school, and is particularly pleased with its contribution to improving playground behaviour and knowing how to help children if they do not feel happy in the playground. They are excited about future changes to the dining room and are interested and well informed about healthy eating and the benefits of exercise. They love the school's clubs and especially the residential visits, where they feel they learn a lot.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The overall satisfactory quality of teaching masks the fact that much of it is good in key areas, such as the Foundation Stage and Year 6. Here, pupils make good progress. In these classes, pupils of all abilities are effectively challenged and given work at the right degree of difficulty to help them learn at a challenging rate. However, not all teachers plan their lessons to meet the wide range of needs in their classes. In these cases, the work set is not matched well enough to meet the needs of all pupils and this results in some, particularly the more able, being insufficiently challenged to make as much progress as they should. Teachers manage behaviour well and all adults have good relationships with the pupils. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are included well in every aspect of the school's work. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and enable these pupils to make good progress. The quality of teachers' marking is variable but much is effective in showing pupils what they have to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the school's good curriculum and appreciate the good range of resources. The strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy enables pupils of all abilities to make improving progress in these areas. The school's strong emphasis on personal, social and health education (PSHE) has led to the good personal development and well-being of the pupils in a secure and happy environment. Older pupils are very aware of the need to take care of the environment and are particularly proud that they are working to be an Eco-Friendly School. Pupils enjoy using the good facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) to do research and for revision. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities, residential trips, visits and visitors enriches the curriculum and is much appreciated by the pupils and their parents. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and provides a well planned range of activities that covers all areas of learning fully.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils benefit greatly from, and appreciate, the school's good care and support. It places a strong emphasis on the welfare of its pupils who benefit from well managed systems. Pupils say they feel safe and child protection and health and safety procedures are good. The provision for vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with statements of special educational need is good. These groups are supported well by all staff in the school, including the special needs coordinator and the learning mentor. As a result, many achieve well. The school has strong and effective links with outside agencies to help provide a high standard of care for its pupils. It has robust systems to manage behaviour and to improve attendance. The school's academic guidance is satisfactory, although it is good in some year groups. Procedures to check pupils' progress have been in place relatively recently and have not yet had time to have made a full impact on raising standards throughout the school. However, they provide satisfactory guidance for teachers to check on pupils' progress against their formal targets as they go through school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher leads and manages the school well and is effectively supported by his senior staff. They have successfully engendered a good team spirit and high morale among the staff after a difficult period during the amalgamation. There is a clear commitment to raising pupils' standards and achievement and senior staff realise that the key to this is to improve the quality of provision, particularly teaching. In this, advances are beginning to be made as result of the programme of monitoring and the judicious appointment of some new staff. Some of the main subject leaders are relatively new to their posts, committed to developing their roles and are keen to gain further experience and training. Currently, they give satisfactory support to the leadership team. The governors, led well by the chair, are developing their role and have become increasingly involved in calling the school to account for its performance. Successful steps have been taken to involve parents more in the life of the school and to listen to their views. The school's provision for Family Learning is

becoming increasingly successful in encouraging more parents to visit the school and to feel more comfortable in the school's environment to help their children learn.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

- Thank you very much for all the help you gave to the inspectors when we came to your school recently. We liked talking to you and to your teachers and coming to your assembly. We especially enjoyed your singing. The education and teaching you receive are satisfactory and things are getting better. These are the things we liked most about your school:
- When you first come to school in the Nursery and Reception classes, you make a good start to your education and do well, and you make satisfactory progress after that.
- The standards of your work are improving in English, mathematics and science and are broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- You enjoy school, and most of you attend regularly.
- Your headteacher, who leads the school well, makes sure that those of you who need extra help get it.
- You told us you feel safe and you are given good care and support and sound levels of guidance.
- You all behave and get on well with each other and with all members of staff.
- You understand the importance of exercise and eating healthily. These are the things that we think could be better:
- We have asked the school to make sure that when teachers set you work it is at the right level to help you make good progress, especially for those who find some of the work too easy.
- We have asked those teachers responsible for the main subjects to check regularly on the quality of your work and the teachers' planning. We really enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn and wish you all well for the future.