

Stanton Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105006
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	308737
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Jim Crouch

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	304
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Dave Murphy
Headteacher	Miss Emma Gibson
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Stanton Road Bebington Wirral Merseyside CH63 3HW
Telephone number	0151 334 1398
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized school serves the communities of Bebington and Clatterbridge. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average, but is increasing. The number with a statement of special educational need is below average. The school holds the Healthy School and Activemark awards. The headteacher was appointed in November 2006. Some parts of the school building are being re-developed and as a result some classes are currently housed in temporary accommodation. There is Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in two Reception classes.

There is a playgroup and after-school club on the school site. These provisions were inspected separately and receive a separately written report.

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 very caring school, which provides a good standard of education. Prior to 2006, it experienced significant staffing and financial problems, which affected pupils' progress. The headteacher has successfully addressed these issues so that the staffing and financial situations are now sound. She has restructured the leadership and management team, placed a greater focus on tracking pupils' progress, tackled areas of underperformance and supported staff in raising levels of achievement.

The outstanding level of care, guidance and support is a key factor in securing pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Staff and pupils work well together in a lively, happy and optimistic community, where pupils behave very well and want to learn. The pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated in their outstanding attendance and punctuality. They are courteous and friendly towards visitors and talk about their school with confidence and enthusiasm. Staff consistently celebrate pupils' efforts: they praise and reward them. The reward of 'Golden Time' is particularly valued by pupils who say, 'It really makes you want to be good and try as hard as you can.' Pupils say that they feel safe and secure and that there is always someone to turn to at times of need. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated into the school because of the good interpersonal relationships that exist. Pupils are very aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. This is reflected in their choice of healthy meals at lunchtime and their keenness to participate in the many sporting activities provided by the school. They are keen to contribute to the life of the school, for example, by serving on the school council and acting as play leaders, eco-officers and road safety officers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are very aware of the needs of others, as illustrated by their good care for each other and willing support for a wide range of charities.

Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved since the last inspection and are above average, and well above in science. In recent years achievement in English and mathematics has been satisfactory. However, a focus on raising standards of writing and improvements in identifying and addressing underachievement mean that pupils are now making good progress in English and mathematics across the school. However, as the school recognises, the progress of the more able pupils in mathematics at Key Stage 2 is not as good as it could be. The quality of teaching is good and successfully promotes pupils' learning, including that of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learning is enriched through plentiful extra-curricular activities and a good range of visiting speakers and educational visits. The school now has in place a very effective system for monitoring pupils' progress. Teachers are using this with increasing confidence to plan lessons that better meet the needs of learners and to inform pupils of the progress they are making.

The school makes excellent use of its links with parents and a wide range of organisations to promote the progress and well-being of pupils and to support the community it serves. It has made good progress in addressing issues raised at the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the EYFS because it is well led and managed and the staff work well as a team. Good links with pre-school providers mean that children settle quickly in the Reception classes. Parents are made welcome and a meeting with their child's key worker is the first step in the development of a supportive relationship. Care is good. Children are well supported and quickly develop as independent learners. The Reception classes are currently housed in two temporary classrooms. Despite this the staff have created a safe learning environment, which is colourful and inviting and represents children's work well. For example, the 'I Can' area highlights children's achievements. An appropriately resourced outdoor learning environment is easily accessed from the classrooms, but is not used as well as it might be to extend and enrich children's learning.

Children join the Reception classes with broadly average skills, but with weaknesses in linking sounds and letters. Early assessments on entry and good systems for tracking progress mean that areas of underperformance are addressed quickly. Good planning ensures that children are keen to learn and engage in interesting and challenging activities, such as writing letters to Henry Hedgehog. As a result children make good progress and the majority leave the EYFS with levels higher than those expected for their age. Good links with Year 1 teachers ensure continuity in planning and learning, particularly for those who still need to work on the early learning goals. Children's personal development is good. They are keen to show their work and are proud of their achievements. The EYFS leader shows a real enthusiasm for her role and a determination to improve the provision. This is evident in her ambitious plans for the new integrated Reception class facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the EYFS outdoor learning area is used more effectively to promote learning and progress.
- Ensure that at Key Stage 2, the more able pupils receive a consistently high level of challenge in mathematics so that they make better progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards by the end of Year 6 are above average. Pupils start Year 1 with skills and abilities, which are generally above those typical for their age. Good teaching and support mean that they make good progress through Key Stage 1. In recent years, progress at Key Stage 2 has been broadly satisfactory, with some underperformance in writing and mathematics. Standards in science have been consistently well above average, those in English and mathematics have been closer to the national average. Improvements in the tracking of pupils' progress have led to much more accurate identification of areas of underperformance and individual learning needs. This means that the school is better able to match teaching to learning needs and put support into place for individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are now making good progress towards meeting and in many cases exceeding, their challenging targets in English and mathematics and science, although the progress of the more able pupils in mathematics is not as good as it is in English and science. The improved levels of support mean that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils are making good progress across all key stages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. There is a very strong sense of community harmony within the school. Pupils are courteous and friendly towards visitors and talk about their school with confidence and enthusiasm. They say that they feel safe in school and that incidents of bullying are very rare and always dealt with promptly. They make good use of the friendship and 'time out' stops to support each other and make comments such as, 'There is always some one there to look out for you.' Pupils are proud of their Healthy School Award and the contribution they have made through, for example, asking for water bottles, running a fruit tuck-shop and growing their own vegetables. They have a very good understanding of how to stay fit. They play actively at break and lunchtimes and join in enthusiastically with the daily 'wake and shake' activity at the end of lunchtime. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They show empathy for each other and an appreciation of how their actions can impact on the lives of others. This is evident in their keenness to contribute to the life of the school and their support for a wide a range of charities. Their cultural development is good because of the good provision in personal and social education lessons, art and music. They show very good awareness of their own and other cultures and faiths and are well prepared to live in a multicultural society. Pupils' above average literacy and numeracy skills and good information and communication technology skills enhance their economic well-being. It is clear that that they are very caring, thoughtful and well rounded individuals who are well prepared not only for the next stage of education but also the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall good standard of teaching helps pupils to learn well and make good progress. In a typical lesson, learning is promoted well because teachers have a clear idea about what pupils should know and understand by the end of the lesson. They ensure that pupils are aware of these objectives and that the activities are matched well to pupil's abilities. However, at Key Stage 2, lessons in mathematics are not sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils. Good relationships in the classroom mean that pupils are confident and keen to learn. Teachers plan interesting lessons so all are motivated. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils thoroughly enjoyed discussing how Shakespeare had set the atmospheric scene for the meeting of the witches in Macbeth. The pace of lessons is usually brisk and lively. However, in the few lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher and are not given enough opportunities to ask their own questions, or find ways of developing their own ideas. The quality of marking is very good in the weekly 'Big Write' and is used correctly to tell pupils how well they have done and how to improve, and pupils have good opportunities to assess their own work and that of their partner. However this outstanding practice is less evident in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum helps pupils to achieve well and reach outstanding standards of personal development and well-being. An appropriate amount of time is devoted to developing literacy,

numeracy and other basic skills and there is additional and improving provision for those who need extra help. The enrichment opportunities for the more able pupils are less well developed. The school plans its curriculum well so that pupils in mixed-age classes build on what they already know and have learnt without missing key areas or undue repetition. Good links are made across subjects, such as when pupils write about firework safety. The curriculum and the good range of sporting extra-curricular activities contribute well to pupils' fitness and understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles and keep safe. Provision for music is very good. Visiting staff teach a variety of musical skills, including singing and a range of instruments. All Year 4 pupils learn to play the clarinet and there is a choir. A recorder club is planned. The many visitors to the school and the good range of visits, including a residential trip for Year 6 pupils, add to pupils' enjoyment of school and increase their awareness of the world in which they live.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's strong caring ethos is evident in all aspects of its work. The very positive relationships between pupils and adults ensure that pupils feel safe and confident to ask for help when they need it. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support from the school's inclusion coordinator and outside agencies. The extra help they receive, both in the class and in small groups, from well trained teaching assistants, enables them to make good progress and to take a full part in lessons. School rules are clear and the system of rewards motivates pupils extremely well. Pupils' safety and welfare are central to the school's ethos and safeguarding requirements are met. Pupils are well informed of the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. Reports to parents give good information about their child's progress and personal development and the school's own surveys indicate that parents appreciate the high level of detail they contain.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Since her appointment, the headteacher has provided very good direction and has successfully led a whole-school review of policy and practice. Staff confidence and competence have been enhanced through professional development and this is leading to improved standards and progress. Parents say that they have confidence in the school's leaders. Senior leaders have a clear view of the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement. The raising achievement plan is used well to promote change and to guide the work of leaders and managers. There is a clearly understood strategy for monitoring the work of teachers and pupils. Until recently this was mainly carried out by the school's senior leaders. A move to a more devolved style of management means that subject leaders are now taking more responsibility for ensuring that pupils make good progress. They work well together to ensure that the whole curriculum meets statutory requirements and is well matched to the needs of learners. They are becoming increasingly involved in whole-school improvement and evaluation. The school promotes community cohesion well through its very strong links with a wide range of organisations. The governing body shows a good awareness of the performance of the school and those aspects that need further development. Recent improvements in planning the work of the governing body has enabled governors to more effectively question the work of the school and contribute more to the self-evaluation process.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so polite and friendly. The inspectors enjoyed talking to you and hearing all of the things you like about your school.

We found that your school gives you a good education. We were particularly impressed by your outstanding behaviour and your keenness to do well in lessons. You all make a good contribution to the life of the school and clearly know how to live healthily. You show good awareness of the needs of others in many ways, including through your charity work. The staff have worked hard to help you enjoy your education by developing a good curriculum with lots of extra activities and visits. We found that your school looks after you very well and that you make good progress.

There are two important things we think could be better. We have asked the school to make sure that children in the Reception class learn more from the time they spend in the outside learning area and that those of you in Key Stage 2 who find learning easy are given more challenging work in mathematics so that you make better progress.

Of course, you also have an important part to play in helping your school to carry on improving. You can do this by continuing to be as positive about learning as you are now and keep trying to improve all aspects of your work.

Thanks again for making us feel so welcome.