

Stanton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112637
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	310957
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elaine Powell
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Nettleton
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2003
School address	Woodland Road Stanton Burton-on-trent Staffordshire DE15 9TJ
Telephone number	01283564102
Fax number	01283565780

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves the former mining community of Stanton. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage and mostly come from homes where English is the first language. Attainment on entry to the school is below expectations although there is a wide range of ability in each class. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal and the proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory level of education for its pupils. The headteacher is successfully helping the school to recover from an unsettled period in its history. During this time there has been a significant change in staffing, and falling standards of achievement. Throughout this period, the headteacher has remained resolute in her determination and work to bring about improvements. This has paid off and an improvement is now evident in pupils' standard of work with a corresponding upturn in results. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in mathematics and this represents good achievement. Standards in English and science are broadly average with the pupils' performance in reading being much stronger than in writing.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and based upon its track record of improvements since then, it has a satisfactory capacity to carry on improving. Standards in Year 2 are continuing to improve, although this improvement is less pronounced in writing, particularly boys' writing. Standards are improving because children are given a good start to their learning in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1, and the teaching in Year 2 enables pupils to build satisfactorily on this. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with examples of good practice, particularly in the teaching of French. In the more successful lessons, relationships are strong and teachers are making much better use of assessment data to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve. Less successful lessons do not challenge the pupils enough, especially in writing. The school accurately recognises the lack of consistency in the quality of teaching.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The positive school ethos and engaging range of opportunities available supports pupils' personal development and keeps them interested. As a result, pupils enjoy their schooling and attendance rates are above average. They have a good understanding of healthy life styles. However, the behaviour of a few is unpredictable and inconsistently managed; this impairs the climate for learning. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through the work of the school council, for example, and are appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is committed to teamwork and promoting a secure and nurturing environment although she has yet to gain the confidence of a significant number of parents, as the returns and comments in the Ofsted parents' questionnaires revealed. Welfare, care and guidance are satisfactory. The level of management expertise amongst the staff team is variable. There is good practice in the Foundation Stage for example, but expertise and understanding in other areas lacks consistency. However, the school's strategy for strengthening its effectiveness is gaining momentum. The governors' view of the school's performance is gaining a critical edge and they provide satisfactory support.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is led well and provides children with a positive and enjoyable start to their education. The welcoming staff work hard to ensure children are nurtured in a caring and supportive environment. Good links have been established with the parents and children enjoy a wide variety of activities both inside and out which motivate and enthuse them. However, the outside area needs further improvement to provide for greater opportunities for the children's physical development. Staff work well together as a team to promote the children's

growing independence and good social skills. They have recently introduced systems to accelerate learning in letter sounds and writing and these are beginning to have a significant impact on raising standards. The quality of teaching is good overall, with good questioning skills and timely interventions to encourage learning. Children make good progress to reach the expectations of the Foundation Stage curriculum in most areas by the end of Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to the standard of the best, in order to raise standards in writing, particularly for the boys.
- Improve the leadership roles of all staff in order to continue the momentum for improvement.
- Improve the relationship with parents to establish an effective partnership.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an OFSTED inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter school with skills and knowledge that are below expectations, particularly in areas of communication, language and literacy. However, there is a wide spread of ability. For example, a few speak confidently, whilst others have a limited vocabulary and struggle to express their ideas clearly. The previous decline in standards has been halted and they are rising again in Key Stage 1. Although still below average in writing, standards are broadly average in reading and mathematics, although only a few pupils achieve the higher levels. Teachers and pupils now have a much clearer idea of what is needed to improve. Current standards in Year 6 are broadly average. Standards in reading are above those in writing where the quality of pupils' presentation and spelling are particular weaknesses. Pupils achieve well in mathematics because they have good opportunities to apply their skills in problem solving activities. Standards in science are broadly average. Many boys have difficulty recording their scientific findings because of weaknesses in their writing. Because they are well supported, those pupils who find learning difficult make appropriate gains in acquiring the basic skills. The more academic pupils are challenged to reach their potential, more especially in mathematics, because they are encouraged to apply their skills to solve problems. Pupils achieve well in French.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy school and attendance rates are above average year-on-year. Their spiritual and cultural development, nurtured through activities such as the full-scale production of 'The Sound of Music', is good. Pupils' social and moral development is satisfactory. Most behave well in lessons and around school. However, the restlessness and inappropriate responses of a small minority of pupils sometimes slow the pace of learning. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves fit and safe and are aware of the importance of a balanced diet. They make regular contributions to the school community through the work of the school council and fund raising. Pupils' preparation for the world of work is supported by good skills in mathematics but let down by below average attainment in writing. Pupils enjoy good opportunities to apply and develop their computer skills in a broad range of contexts.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good practice, particularly in classes for older and the youngest pupils. There is variation in the quality of teaching across the school, particularly in the infant classes, and as a result, in the rate of progress pupils make. Lessons are planned carefully and the most effective use a range of methods and resources which engage pupils' interest. In the less effective lessons, too much time is spent engaging the pupils' attention and valuable learning time is lost. Through regular monitoring the school has recognised the inconsistency and is seeking to address this by additional support. Particular strengths in the teaching lie in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning and the effective contribution made by teaching assistants. They are particularly effective in supporting those who need individual help. Currently however, there is not enough challenge for the pupils in Year 2, particularly in reading and writing, to ensure that they are achieving their best.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is structured satisfactorily to support learning in the mixed-age classes. Throughout the school, there is an appropriate focus on promoting skills in literacy and numeracy. The way the curriculum is planned has recently been reorganised to make stronger links between subjects and to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively. For example, ICT is used effectively to support learning across a range of subjects. French is well embedded. Although the school is successful in enriching the curriculum with opportunities for sport and the performing arts, it is less effective in strengthening links with the local community. This limits its impact on supporting pupils' personal development and in developing their sense of community responsibility.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and well-being meet statutory requirements. However, although satisfactory, there are inconsistencies in the way adults deal with pupils' behaviour. Children starting school settle to learning quickly because of good arrangements that prepare them well. Pupils with learning needs and disabilities are supported well by knowledgeable teaching assistants. Procedures to monitor the progress of pupils, particularly in writing, are being sharpened, but this information is not yet consistently applied in order to challenge them to achieve more. The increased use of assessment data is beginning to accelerate pupils' progress as they are growing in their understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has remained determined to improve the quality of education in the face of staffing difficulties. Standards are beginning to improve because of the introduction of greater rigour in the monitoring of pupils' progress. The staff function well as a team because of the

headteacher's work in encouraging this approach. However, the schools relationship with parents is a weakness. Many parents lack confidence in the headteacher and this lack of trust is eroding the time and energies of the school. Staff are still developing their roles and responsibilities in evaluating the work of the school and in measuring how successful it is. Governors are committed to the school and provide conscientious support. Their awareness of their responsibility to hold the school to account has recently grown. However, their role as critical friends, particularly in terms of monitoring standards and smoothing links with the parents, is a weaker area of their work.

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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?	3
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?	4
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stanton Primary School, Burton-on-Trent, DE15 9TJ.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school because everybody was helpful and friendly. I particularly enjoyed my discussions with you and hearing your views. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, take part in your assemblies, meet the school council, and listen to your wonderful singing. I can understand why you enjoy school as there are many things that make it special. Here are some of them:

- You clearly want to do your best to learn in lessons and try hard.
- You are making sound progress with your work.
- The school is careful to keep you safe and happy.
- Almost all of you follow the school rules and your behaviour is satisfactory.
- There are good opportunities for you to use computers and to learn French.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities to help you enjoy school.
- Mrs Nettleton is determined to make sure that your school continues to improve.

Your school provides a satisfactory standard of education. It is really important that you continue to try your best and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. To help it improve, I am asking your teachers to keep on finding ways to make the school better. I have asked them to make your lessons interesting all of the time and also to help you to improve your writing. I also want your school and your parents to work with each other as partners, so together they can help things improve. You can help by doing your very best each day and by telling your parents about the good things that happen in school.

Very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector