

Stockham Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 123072 |
| Local Authority | Oxfordshire |
| Inspection number | 314480 |
| Inspection dates | 27–28 November 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | George Rayner |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 186 |
| 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 Duncan Francis |
| Headteacher | Mrs Jill Dovey-Bridgeman |
| Date of previous school inspection | 27 June 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Stockham Way Wantage OX12 9HL |
| Telephone number | 01235 764407 |
| Fax number | 01235 769320 |

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|--------------------------|---------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves mainly a large housing estate. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than in most schools. The main needs of these pupils are related to moderate difficulties in developing basic literacy and numeracy skills, sometimes affected by behavioural and emotional difficulties. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none is at an early stage of learning to speak English. The school makes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in a Reception class. The current headteacher was permanently appointed in January 2007, after a period of temporary leadership. Registered all-day childcare is provided on-site for pre-school children, run by a separate organisation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The great majority of parents agree and say that their children are very happy and make good progress. The headteacher has an exceptionally clear vision for the future direction of the school. She provides leadership that many staff and governors describe as inspiring.

All adults share an ambition to make the school outstanding in all areas. So far, their work has had strongest impact on the EYFS, pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and care, guidance and support. These are now outstanding. The impact of their work is still developing in other areas, but is doing so well.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school and enjoy coming here immensely. They show this through their good attendance, excellent behaviour and highly enthusiastic willingness to join in with all that the school offers. Pupils live very active lives and have an excellent understanding of why it is important to eat and drink sensibly. The adults care for the pupils exceptionally well. As a result, pupils feel extremely secure and are confident that there is always an adult they can confide in if they have a problem.

The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and providing guidance and support are excellent. However, except in the EYFS, pupils make good, rather than outstanding progress. This is because teaching and learning are currently good and are supported by a good curriculum. While lessons are often outstanding, they are not yet consistently enough of this quality to enable outstanding progress. Many lessons provide highly imaginative activities that succeed very well in making learning fun for pupils. In other lessons, activities are less exciting.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' overall standards are broadly average. Progress is very good in mathematics, where Year 6 standards are on the threshold of being above average. Progress, although good, is least strong in English and leads to average standards. This is because the rate at which pupils develop writing skills, while satisfactory, is slower than other aspects of their progress. After careful analysis, teachers have improved the help that they give pupils in writing. As a result progress is beginning to accelerate, as shown, for example, by increasing skill in using paragraphs to make writing varied and interesting. However, the impact on standards at the end of Year 6 is yet to be fully seen.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The EYFS provides an excellent balance between learning through play and exploration, and structured, adult-led, activities. The varied and exciting resources in the indoor and outdoor areas are used extremely effectively for activities where children take decisions and develop their independence and confidence. These improvements have been introduced since the previous inspection, so the impact of this excellent start is not evident in the standards of the oldest pupils in the school. In assessing progress, the staff focus very efficiently and regularly on each child, to ensure an excellent match between all activities and the specific needs of all. As a result, children make outstanding progress and are secure in all of their learning areas by the end of the Reception Year.

Children quickly learn routines for learning, cooperating with one another and keeping themselves safe and healthy. They are extremely happy because staff have developed an

exceptionally safe and welcoming learning environment. High priority is given to children's welfare. Teamwork to secure this is extremely strong, both among the staff and with parents. A highly effective system identifies a key adult for each child to turn to for support and guidance. Excellent teamwork and the dedication of all staff to the happiness, security and progress of each child are key features of the outstanding leadership and management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise English standards at the end of Year 6, by accelerating progress in writing.
- Make teaching fully consistent at the highest quality to be seen in the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When pupils start at the school, their skills and knowledge are generally lower than expected for their age. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and their overall standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. In mathematics, pupils develop a good range and depth of skills and are becoming increasingly competent in using these independently to solve problems. In science, they are becoming increasingly proficient at finding things out through their own investigations. Pupils develop good skills in speaking and listening, but many find it difficult to develop their ideas in well-structured writing. Because their needs are carefully identified and effectively provided for, pupils who find it difficult to develop basic skills in literacy and numeracy, or to concentrate on their work, make as much progress as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils understand very well the expectations for behaviour and work, and they fully accept the school rules because they helped to draw these up. Pupils thoroughly enjoy working together and do this so well that they become excellent team members. One commented, 'We are more than a school - we are like a family.' Pupils carry out a wide range of roles with great diligence and effectiveness. A partnership with a nearby secondary school has provided coaching for older pupils. This has helped them to become excellent playground leaders, running games and supporting lonely pupils. In addition to making an outstanding contribution to school life, pupils are very active in the local community; this is shown, for example, through their reputation as fundraisers for many charities. During the inspection, all pupils enthusiastically participated in the national 'Big Sing', in partnership with schools across the country. Progress in their learning prepares pupils well for their futures. This is added to by the experience that they gain in activities such as working together to run their own stall in the school's Christmas Fair, selling donated items they have collected.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In most lessons, teachers plan a variety of interesting and useful activities that motivate pupils well and ensure a good pace of learning. Teachers generate good relationships through their enthusiasm and the encouragement that they give, so that pupils are willing workers. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to ensure that pupils having difficulty quickly receive

the help they need to enable them to keep up with the pace of learning. In the very best lessons, highly imaginative planning gives pupils exciting activities that are extremely successful in making learning fun. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, when pupils thoroughly enjoyed experimenting with multiplication to develop their understanding of how this works. Teachers ensure that the most-able pupils are well challenged in most lessons, but in a few, planning does not identify well enough what is expected of them. When this happens, their progress temporarily slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In addition to providing all of the required elements, the curriculum has several effective enhancements. These include specialist-taught French in all years. Pupils have good opportunities to use computers to enhance their work in all subjects. The previous inspection found that the curriculum for religious education did not meet statutory requirements, as it did not sufficiently follow the locally agreed syllabus. Better planning and time allocations have fully tackled this. The curriculum is rich in opportunities for pupils to develop their personal and social skills, for example through exploring the impact of their actions on others, or meeting challenges to spend money wisely. Integrated themes are a developing strength, providing motivating opportunities for pupils to bring together their learning from different subjects for real tasks. For example, a link between science and geography enhances pupils' understanding of issues such as the threat to rainforests. These are at an early stage of development, however, and not yet well established in all subjects. Good enrichment includes a diverse range of well-attended clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

As a result of excellent systems for ensuring their safety and welfare, and the exceptional commitment of staff, pupils are exceptionally secure and happy. Extremely effective use is made of links with external agencies to ensure high-quality additional help for pupils who need this. Several parents of pupils with physical impairment or particular learning needs praised the school for ensuring that their children are exceptionally well supported. They said that their children have been fully included in all activities, with tremendous impact on their progress, security and confidence. A highly effective link with the pre-school provision, including regular visits to the Reception class before children enrol, is part of an excellent induction process that helps them to settle quickly and happily. Similarly effective links with the local secondary school help to pave the way for smooth transition to the next stage of pupils' education. Notable improvements have been made to systems for tracking each pupil's progress. These now provide an excellent tool for teachers to effectively support the more able pupils to achieve high standards as well as to quickly identify pupils in danger of falling behind in their expected progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Members of the senior team work well together as a cohesive unit. Subject leaders develop and monitor their areas well. However, they are not yet sufficiently obtaining first-hand evidence of quality and performance by systematically observing

lessons - this is necessary in order to help them to guide their colleagues in how to improve further the way in which their subjects are taught. Governors challenge the school well and provide committed support. For example, they willingly go on school trips and raise funds for events such as a science workshop. The leaders have a sincere and effective commitment to community cohesion. This ensures that all pupils are secure and valued members of the school and local community. The headteacher is aware of the need to improve this further and is considering developing a link with a school in a nearby, more culturally diverse, area. Rigorous self-evaluation has given the school's leaders a good awareness of strengths to build on and areas still needing improvement. Well-considered strategies have already made a substantial impact in several areas, for example in raising Year 2 standards and building further on strengths noted by the last inspection. Their track record shows that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| 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

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| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 1 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 1 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 1 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 1 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 1 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| 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

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| 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**

12 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stockham Primary School, Wantage, OX12 9HL

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you. We are grateful for the help you gave by talking to us and showing us your work. We were able to see that yours is a good school. Some things about your school are outstanding.

You make good progress in your learning and reach standards that are similar to those in most schools. Your strongest subject is mathematics. You develop your skills well, and are learning to use these to solve problems on your own. You are not quite so good at English. You do learn to speak and listen well, but many of you find it difficult to put your ideas down in writing. The teachers know that they need to give some of you more help with this. They are improving this, and we could see that you are using this well to make your writing better. Some of your teachers' lessons are excellent. These are the ones where the teachers really use their imaginations to give you really fun things to do. Not all lessons are quite this good. The teachers know this and are working together to make all lessons as good as the best ones. We agree that that this is a good thing to do.

The way that you are growing up is one of the outstanding things about your school. Some of you told us that you are very proud of your school and love being here. We could see that this is true. You help your teachers greatly, because you attend regularly, behave well and join in cheerfully with all of the things that take place. Your headteacher knows how to make your school even better. All of the adults are helping her to do this. We know that you will also continue to help. Well done to you all and very best wishes for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

George Rayner

Lead Inspector