

# Stoughton Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124975
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	315106
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	George Rayner

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	233
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Anne-Marie Keogh-Swindells
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Dawn Mayson and Mrs Belinda William
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Stoughton Road Guildford GU2 9ZT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01483 504172
<b>Fax number</b>	01483 453069

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school is similar in size to other primary schools. Although pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are average overall, there is considerably variation in their individual home circumstances, with several living in less affluent areas of Guildford. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few are at an early stage of learning to speak English. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. The school provides a pre-school language unit for the local area, currently with seven children on roll.

## 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 with outstanding features. Staff have been very successful in pursuing their central aim to provide an extremely happy place in which all can flourish. This is shown in the school's outstanding care and support, which results in pupils' personal development and well-being also being outstanding. Pupils are very well known to staff. Parents said 'the headteachers know every pupil's name and this makes them feel special'. Pupils develop their confidence very well and feel extremely secure. They are very knowledgeable about how to live safe and healthy lives. The school has an equally strong commitment to the young children in the Language Unit and very effectively helps them to integrate with the children in the Nursery.

Pupils achieve well to securely reach average standards in their literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 2. Since the last inspection, the school has set out to make its curriculum a rich and varied series of experiences to inspire pupils to be actively involved in learning by exploring and investigating. It has transformed its buildings and grounds into an exciting setting for this to happen. As a result, the curriculum is outstanding. Many parents commented on the impact that this has on their children. One voiced the opinions of many in saying, 'Every day my child is excited about coming to this happy and vibrant school.'

The headteachers and staff are aware that, while the curriculum is contributing fully to pupils' personal development, it is not yet resulting in outstanding achievement. This is because, while lessons often have outstanding elements, teaching and learning are currently good, rather than outstanding. Teachers are working together to share their best ideas to raise the number of outstanding lessons. Recent improvements to assessment procedures are now giving teachers excellent information for ensuring that lessons meet the needs of all pupils and they are making increasingly effective use of this. They plan good, open-ended opportunities for the more able pupils to use their ability and imagination. However, their planning does not always carefully identify exactly what they expect from these pupils to ensure that they do as well as they could.

Leadership and management are good. The joint headteachers work together as a highly reflective, effective and cohesive team, providing a very clear direction for the school. The school has focused effectively on helping pupils to overcome their weaknesses in literacy. The impact of improvements in curriculum, teaching and assessment is now beginning to be seen in rising writing standards. This has resulted in Year 2 pupils improving on their performance of previous years by reaching their realistically challenging targets in all areas in 2007. The subject leaders have made a good contribution. As key figures in the drive to raise standards though, their involvement in monitoring and evaluation is not yet planned systematically enough to ensure that this is consistent and regular in all subjects. In securing good improvement in standards since the last inspection and raising curriculum, care and personal development to outstanding levels, the school has shown very clearly that it has a good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. They arrive with standards generally below expected levels for their age and well below in using language to communicate. The imaginative and stimulating environment encourages children to explore the world around them and develops their independence. Because of good links between the Nursery and Reception classes, children's

learning and personal development proceeds smoothly. Consequently they make good progress and are working securely in almost all their areas of learning by the time they leave the Reception class. They are still slightly weak in their writing, but making good progress nevertheless.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that teachers always plan what they expect from the most able pupils, so that they can make sure that they always achieve as well as they possibly can.
- Ensure that the involvement of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating their areas is systematically planned for all subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 2 have securely reached average standards in reading and mathematics. Very good progress in writing results in pupils clearly overcoming their earlier language weaknesses, to reach slightly above average standards. Almost all pupils develop appropriate skills in spelling and vocabulary and many are developing good command of different styles to make their writing more interesting. The great majority of pupils become competent mathematicians, but do not always draw sufficiently on their skills to solve problems. This reduces standards, particularly for the more able pupils. Because their needs are carefully identified and effectively provided for, pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress to their classmates. While the most able pupils make good progress, they do not always make the fullest possible use of their learning opportunities to show what they can really do.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their enthusiasm for school is evident in their highly positive attitudes to learning and their very good behaviour. Pupils have responded well to encouragement to come to school regularly, so that attendance has steadily improved in recent years. Pupils look after one another very well. They eagerly take part in a wide range of activities to help them keep healthy. For example, they grow their own produce on the allotment, harvest it and use it for cooking in class. The school council takes its role very seriously and the members are very proud of their contribution to improvements in the school's playground environment. Equally strong is the sense of involvement pupils feel with the wider community. As one parent wrote, 'We are very fortunate to have a school like Stoughton at the very heart of our community.' Pupils develop a view of the wider world through their links with a Nigerian school. They enthusiastically raise money for a variety of charities. Their good progress in literacy and numeracy prepares pupils well for their future education. Through opportunities such as selling their own produce they learn valuable life skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan effectively to make lessons fun and encourage pupils to learn by finding things out for themselves. They clearly set out their expectations for effort and behaviour, generating good relationships so that pupils work willingly. Many lessons have outstanding elements.

These are seen when staff imaginatively use resources to stimulate high involvement and enjoyment. For example, pupils worked enthusiastically in teams to carry out imaginative tasks in the school garden. This greatly helped them to develop their skills in speaking, listening and teamwork. Good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils who need extra help to keep up with work quickly receive this. Teachers often plan stimulating, open-ended tasks, which give the more able pupils good scope to extend their work. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils could learn from these activities. This makes it difficult for them to check that all pupils are making use of these opportunities to apply their skills to the fullest possible extent.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

An innovative commitment to activities that are challenging and enjoyable is at the heart of the school's approach. This results in the curriculum making an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development. The school has turned its buildings and grounds into a highly stimulating environment for learning and playing. It uses this extremely well as a setting for tasks that succeed very well in balancing the subjects that pupils need to study, with exciting activities such as role-play. Work in different subjects is often very effectively linked. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson in which pupils used computers to develop their literacy skills in the context of a musical activity. The school provides an exceptionally varied and stimulating range of enrichment activities. Pupils show their great enjoyment of the different clubs through their excellent participation. Visits by musicians, dance and drama specialists, gardeners and overseas visitors regularly enrich pupils' experiences. Parents' appreciation was illustrated by one who said, 'The school offers a wide variety of exciting activities with enthusiasm and energy.'

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school has a very strong commitment to caring, reflected in comprehensive arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare. Pupils say they feel safe and confident to approach an adult if they have a problem. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are very well supported. The school works very effectively in partnership with a wide range of agencies to meet their needs. Academic guidance is very strong. Pupils' progress is meticulously tracked to identify where extra support or further challenge is needed. Marking is informative and teachers are becoming increasingly efficient at using assessment information to track and support pupils' progress. Parents are successfully encouraged to support their children's learning by guiding them at home.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a high level of unity in the school and staff working at all levels are supporting the headteachers with commitment and effectiveness. The enthusiastic, energetic and capable subject leaders have often made good contributions through helping to identify and introduce improvements in their areas. However, the fullest use is not yet being made of their skills and commitment as they are not systematically and regularly involved in monitoring and evaluation. Governors are well informed and support the school very well, while being willing to challenge and question it where necessary. Self-evaluation, well supported by guidance from local authority

advisers, is rigorous and efficient. It has effectively identified the school's strengths and the areas that it has needed to improve.

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is 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
How well 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 the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 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	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

18 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stoughton Infant School, Guildford, GU2 9ZT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and 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.

You make good progress in your learning. Pupils from your school have always been better at numeracy than reading and writing. The teachers have worked hard to help you to become better writers. Because of this you now do as well in writing as in numeracy.

The grown ups have also worked hard to make your school a great place to learn in. They have made it a bright and exciting place to be and give you many exciting things to do. They are pleased that you join in so well. You help them a lot by coming to school regularly, behaving well and working hard. We could see that the grown ups are proud of you.

The headteachers and staff know how to make your school even better and are working hard to do this. We have asked them to make sure they do two things. We want them to make sure that they always give the brightest pupils hard enough work, so that they always do as well as they possibly can. We also want the headteachers to make sure that the teachers who run the subjects have lots of chances to go into lessons to check how well things are going.

Well done to you all and very best wishes for the future.

George Rayner

Lead inspector