

Staverton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126360
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315518
Inspection dates	12–13 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David McNally
Headteacher	Bruce Douglas
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2003
School address	School Lane Staverton Trowbridge BA14 6NZ
Telephone number	01225 782388
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Staverton is a village primary school where the current headteacher has been in post for two years. Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly at the level expected, although it fluctuates and was below expectations in the previous two years. Some year groups have a considerable number of pupils who joined the school after Reception. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A few of the small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups speak English as an additional language. The school runs a breakfast club and holds the Activemark, Artsmark and Healthy School awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Staverton is a satisfactory and improving school, which has strengths in several aspects of its work. The main reason for this is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and his very good capacity to drive improvement forward. This has been especially important for the school as there have been considerable changes in the senior management team due to long term sickness and difficulties in appointing a permanent deputy headteacher. With the support of the local authority, the headteacher has successfully developed the skills of governors and staff with management responsibilities. These have begun to support the school's work more effectively, although their involvement in planning for improvement is still growing. Improvement has accelerated over the last two years and the school's success is evident in the more effective provision and rising standards. Accurate self-evaluation clearly pinpoints areas for improvement. The school is very aware that still more needs to be done and staff and governors are now working successfully to address the weaknesses that remain. This gives confidence that the school is well placed to improve further.

The school takes its responsibility for keeping pupils safe and well cared for very seriously. Parents recognise this and one wrote, 'The staff are very caring.' They value the well run breakfast club. Pupils feel secure in school because staff ensure that they develop a good awareness of how to keep healthy and safe. Over the last two years systems for checking on how well pupils progress, which encourage their own involvement, have helped raise aspirations. This is particularly evident in reading, although in some other aspects systems are relatively new so the full effect has yet to be seen. Good pastoral support and guidance help ensure most pupils behave well including those who have specific emotional, behavioural or social needs. Pupils enjoy school and like their teachers. Attendance is above average.

Both the curriculum and teaching have improved. The school is increasingly introducing a more relevant and fun curriculum that keeps most pupils engaged in lessons and working hard. However, the full effect of its impact on standards is not yet evident. Teachers' consistent behaviour management means that very few lessons are disrupted, although some pupils get restless if they have to sit on the carpet for too long. Staff make sure that pupils are clear about what they need to do and good support is given to those who have specific learning or language needs. However, the school has only recently begun to give the same attention to higher attaining pupils who are not always suitably challenged throughout lessons.

Achievement is satisfactory, and improving, and is good in Reception. Pupils who have specific learning, language or behavioural needs achieve as well as their classmates. By Years 2 and 6 standards are around average, which indicates satisfactory progress from when pupils start. Pupils' good progress in reading, as a result of the school's focus on this aspect last year, is helping to raise standards in English.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children do well in Reception because of the stimulating learning environment that captivates their interest and encourages them to learn. The provision is well led and managed. The effective teaching and curriculum help children make good progress. By the end of Reception children's skills are above expectations. Parents recognise this and one wrote, 'My child is coming on in leaps and bounds in reading, writing and sums.' The classroom and secure outdoor area are

well organised to support an investigative approach to learning. Daily and weekly planning is good, although it does not always identify how the higher attaining children's learning can be extended. Nevertheless, staff are quick to set new challenges for children as they work on their activities. Resources, such as 'an unexpected parcel' and 'a cold polar bear who needs a warm home to be made for him', are used exceptionally well to enthuse and motivate children who eagerly respond and contribute their ideas.

What the school should do to improve further

- Consolidate recent improvements in writing, mathematics and science by ensuring staff increase their expectations of what the higher attaining pupils can achieve.
- Increase the effectiveness of subject leaders and governors in monitoring the school's work and driving forward improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Reception children's good progress results in standards being mainly above expectations by the end of the year. Expectations are in line in communication, language and literacy as, in this aspect, standards on entry were below those usually found.

In Years 1 to 6 standards are rising and the school exceeded its targets in the Year 6 national tests. This is the result of improving progress, although it is satisfactory overall. Progress in reading has improved well over the past year and by Year 2 standards in this aspect are above average. They are average in writing and mathematics. By Year 6, standards in mathematics and science are average. Standards are below average in English where pupils' writing skills are less well developed, although they are making better progress this year. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing the skills that will help them in future life.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

From when they start in Reception, pupils make good progress in their personal development and sense of well-being. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Given the considerable number of pupils who have specific emotional, social or behavioural needs, the school has done well to achieve this. As a result, pupils thrive in the safe and happy environment. Pupils say, 'We have fun here.' They especially enjoy it when lesson activities are exciting and very much appreciate the many opportunities to take part in after school sports. Pupils' good attitudes are helping to improve progress, although a few pupils find it difficult to concentrate throughout lessons. The effective contribution to the school and wider community is evident in the work of the school council. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils are very conscious of the needs of others and enjoy fundraising for playground equipment and various charities. Older pupils often help younger ones, for example with reading or at playtime, when they enjoy looking out for others to make sure they are safe. Pupils are increasingly aware of what to do in potentially dangerous situations and of the importance of eating healthily and exercising regularly.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Good monitoring and support for teaching have led to improvements over the past two years. Whilst improved planning has ensured more consistency, there are still aspects which are better in some classes than others. Activities are relevant and interesting so pupils want to learn and staff make sure they are clear about what they need to do to succeed. However, tasks planned for the higher attaining pupils do not always help them to do their best, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school reading is well taught, improving the rate of progress. In other subjects, recent strategies to improve teaching are too new to have had a significant impact on progress. A strong feature in lessons is the consistent behaviour management resulting in far less disruption due to poor behaviour. However, some staff still keep pupils sitting on the carpet for too long and then a few become restless and lose concentration.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Recent developments are helping to improve the quality of learning, although some are too new to have had a significant effect on progress. Strengths are already evident in the good programmes for pupils' personal, social and health education, for children in the Foundation Stage, and for reading. An emphasis on planning activities that interest and motivate pupils beneficially link together different subjects to make tasks relevant and exciting. For example, in an outstanding Year 4 lesson, pupils were learning new skills through English, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education, as well as developing their social skills. However, planning does not identify challenging enough activities for the higher attaining pupils. The Artsmark award reflects the school's emphasis on creative arts, evident in the extremely attractive displays and murals. A wide range of popular extra-curricular activities successfully supports pupils' academic, physical and social skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Regular risk assessments and the procedures for child protection and staff vetting are good. The pupils most at risk are well cared for and those with learning, language or behavioural needs are supported well. Pupils' progress is carefully checked and a range of intervention and support programmes effectively help those who have fallen behind to catch up. A similar system for supporting higher attaining pupils is too new to have had an influence on their progress. Good pastoral support includes a number of productive partnerships with outside agencies, for example a local special school. Pupils' individual improvement targets are starting to hasten progress, especially in reading. Marking helps pupils recognise how well they are doing, but does not always specify how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Under the exceptionally strong leadership of the headteacher, much has been done over the last two years to improve the capacity of staff and governors to help move the school forward.

Staff with management responsibilities have increased their skills in monitoring and development work with positive effects particularly resulting from the good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, English and personal, social and health education. Senior management team members provide good support, although the absence of some key staff has inevitably meant that the school has had to prioritise areas for development. The quality of provision and pupils' progress are monitored well and the school is clear about how remaining weaknesses should be addressed. Appropriate strategies have been put in place to do so, although it is too soon for some of these to have had a significant effect on standards. The school consults well with pupils and parents and most parents feel well informed and supported. Governors are very supportive and increasingly take on responsibility for key aspects of the school's work. In particular, their contribution to risk assessment is very good and, together with the headteacher, they have successfully reduced the school's considerable overspend.

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

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Staverton CofE VC Primary School, Staverton, Trowbridge, BA14 6NZ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunch time to talk to us. We think your school is satisfactory, but some things are already good and others are improving too.

Here are some of the things we found out were good about the school.

- You enjoy school and most of you work hard.
- You are making better progress and standards are rising. We can see the results of this in the above average standards in reading.
- Children in Reception do well.
- Behaviour is good and you get on well together. You are very helpful, for example when older pupils look after the younger ones.
- Staff are working hard to make learning more interesting and fun.
- Adults take good care of you and are giving you a lot more advice on how you can improve.
- Your headteacher has been especially good at helping your school to improve and now the staff and governors are helping him to do this as well.

Here are some of the things we would like to see improved.

- Help those of you who find work easy to do even better. You can help by always looking for ways to improve.
- Make sure that staff and governors develop the skills they need to help the school improve.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson Lead Inspector