

Stockingate Mill Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130865
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	315633
Inspection dates	20–21 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Pattinson

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mark Henfrey
Headteacher	Mrs Hazel Winter
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2004
School address	Stockingate South Kirkby Pontefract West Yorkshire WF9 3DP
Telephone number	01977 723840
Fax number	0

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a slightly smaller than average junior school situated in an area of high social and economic disadvantage. Almost all pupils live in the local area and are White British. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language is very small and much lower than found nationally. The school has achieved the Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It provides a good curriculum and high quality pastoral support for its pupils. Because of this pupils' personal development is good. The diverse, inclusive and increasingly creative curriculum, which fully meets external requirements, is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors, after-school clubs and events. 'Inspire Day,' seen during the inspection, was well supported by the parents of one class who worked alongside their children to make masks. Pupils enjoy such activities and like school. However, attendance levels are only satisfactory. A small number of pupils do not attend regularly. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, are happy to shoulder responsibility and support good causes, and are soundly equipped for the next stage of their education. The school is a safe and secure environment. It provides a caring place to learn. It works effectively with parents and carers and with external agencies. Most parents have confidence in the school. Good links with the local infant school benefit pupils.

Pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school from starting points that are mostly below average. While their standards remain below national expectation, their achievement is satisfactory. It is best in mathematics, science and reading. However, progress in writing, especially amongst boys, is slower. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and, as a result, make similar progress to other pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Effective management of pupils and good use of praise and encouragement are positive features of all lessons. However, in a few lessons work does not always fully challenge the more able, and this restricts their progress. Good practice in academic guidance is developing. However, many pupils are still unsure of the targets that should help steer their learning. Teachers do not always reflect through their marking what pupils must do to improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The experienced headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked successfully to establish a supportive and caring ethos. As a result, relationships at all levels are good and teamwork is strong, with all staff united in wanting good quality education and equality of opportunity for all pupils. Subject leaders increasingly know what works well and what needs doing in their areas. However, the school does not evaluate its overall effectiveness with sufficient accuracy and rigour. Best use is not made of self-evaluation to set and achieve clear improvement goals. Safeguarding procedures are robust and are reviewed regularly. These meet current requirements. The supportive governing body is not yet involved enough in setting a clear direction for the school. Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory. The school makes sound use of resources and provides satisfactory value for money. It has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of all pupils, including the most able, by raising standards in English, especially in boys' writing, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that all teaching and learning is consistently good, and provides pupils with clear guidance on how well they are performing and what they must do to improve.
- Evaluate its effectiveness accurately and increase the pace and rigour of school improvement.
- Develop the role of the governing body so that it plays a full part in holding the school to account.

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' achievement is satisfactory overall because, from predominantly low starting points, almost all pupils who transfer from the local infant school make sound progress, building on their previous learning. At the end of Year 6 in 2007, standards were below average in English and mathematics in the national tests. In English and mathematics, far fewer pupils than the national average achieved the higher level. Current targets are appropriately challenging and increased levels of intervention have been introduced to help raise standards this year. Improved tracking arrangements are now in place and these show that pupils presently in Year 6 are on course to gain higher grades overall than those achieved last year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported, enabling them to make similar progress to their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy school and are courteous, friendly and behave well towards one another. Pupils demonstrate an awareness of right from wrong and happily follow the behaviour code. They say they feel safe and are confident that any incident of bullying is quickly dealt with. 'Squaddies' welcome new pupils and encourage positive play. The school council, who take their responsibility seriously, are involved in fundraising and improving aspects of the school, such as, playtime activities. Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard to alert parents to the positive impact that good attendance has on progress. However, a small number of pupils are absent too frequently and this has a significant impact on overall attendance figures. Pupils increasingly understand how to keep safe and healthy. They value key elements of healthy lifestyles, such as diet and exercise, which they learn about and experience through an effective programme of personal, social and health education and 'Wake up, shake up' sessions. Pupils enjoy being at school saying 'it's the best ever; I wish we didn't have weekends'. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because these important areas are embedded in the school's ethos. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures through art, religious education and assemblies. As a result, they are well prepared for life in a multicultural society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Secure relationships, effective management of pupils and good use of praise and encouragement are positive features of the satisfactory teaching and learning. Teaching is most successful when time is used to good effect, teachers' enthusiasm ensures pupils are eager to learn, resources are used well to extend learning and demanding tasks bring learning to life. In these instances, pupils find their lessons interesting and challenging and make good progress. Teaching assistants are used well to help pupils learn. However, in a few lessons the pace is not always sufficiently brisk. Pupils sometimes have too little opportunity to practise new learning or consider what they have learnt. Most planning is thorough but occasionally takes too little

account of pupils' needs to manage aspects of their own learning and of information gained from assessment and tracking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The inclusive and increasingly creative curriculum captures the interest of the pupils and helps them enjoy their learning. Teachers have started to make useful links between subjects to break down barriers and make learning relevant. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to extend their learning in clubs such as netball, chess, tennis or football. Pupils are taken on a good range of visits, such as to an adventure centre, the theatre and Nostell Priory. Regular visitors, including a sculptor, help bring learning to life. French for all pupils is a popular addition to the school's diverse curriculum. Music is important in school life. There is a popular choir and many pupils take up the opportunity provided for guitar lessons. Information technology is used effectively in delivering the curriculum and is beginning to be integrated into lessons. 'Inspire' days bring together parents and pupils to enjoy learning in an informative way.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school successfully promotes the well-being of all pupils in its care, including the most vulnerable pupils, boosting their self-esteem and self-awareness through its high quality pastoral support. This is at the heart of its work. Good relationships exist between adults and pupils. Staff know the children well and work hard to treat each person as an individual. The vast majority of parents are pleased with what the school offers and appreciate the warm welcome they receive. External links, such as those with the nearby infant school benefit pupils by ensuring a smooth transition. Arrangements to track pupils' progress are in place but are not yet used effectively to enable the more able pupils to make best possible progress. Teachers mark work conscientiously and praise pupils' efforts. However, many pupils are unsure of their targets and do not know what they need to do next to improve. A new initiative to improve this situation by providing quality feedback in marking has begun.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher strongly promotes a caring and supportive ethos. Alongside her experienced deputy, she leads the school with clear vision. Staff are united in their determination to provide a good quality of education for all pupils and there is no sense of complacency. Improvement planning focuses largely on the right priorities to help drive up standards. However, the length of time allocated to bring about improvement in some areas is too long. Self-evaluation does not focus sharply enough on the outcomes of learning and pupils' achievement. This makes it difficult for the leadership to accurately evaluate the school's effectiveness. Steps have been taken to improve this position. The introduction of more detailed tracking systems is enabling the senior management team to check how well pupils are doing. Subject leaders play a developing role in monitoring the school's work and performance. For example, they are now analysing data to establish patterns and trends in pupils' performance. The supportive governing body is kept well informed and is beginning to ask the sort of questions necessary to aid the school's development. However, it does not yet hold the school to account for what it achieves.

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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 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?	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	3
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?	2
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

Inspection of Stockingate Mill Junior School, Pontefract, WF9 3DP

Thank you very much for making Mrs Twaits and me so welcome in your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and visiting your lessons.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. It was really good to see how kind, friendly and polite you are towards each other and the teachers and other adults who work with you. We like the caring atmosphere and the way all adults who work in school take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy. Almost all of you attend school regularly and arrive on time which helps you build on what you learn each day. You enjoy your 'Wake Up Shake Up' sessions which help you to have a healthy lifestyle. In fact I enjoyed the one I watched so much I wanted to join in! You appreciate the work of the school council who try hard to get things done. We know that most of your lessons are interesting and enable you to gain new knowledge and develop important skills. You told us you like the many visits and visitors and special events like the 'Inspire Days' which your teachers organise to help make your time in school more enjoyable. Your headteacher and all staff work hard.

We have asked your headteacher, the staff and governing body to make some improvements to help the school become even better and to make sure you all achieve well. We have asked your teachers to help all of you improve your standard of work, especially your writing. Some boys are not doing as well as girls, so come on boys give it a go and always try your best with your writing so you can match the girls! We have also asked them to make sure that all lessons challenge you and that you know your targets and what you must do to improve. Make sure you help them by telling them if work is too easy or too hard! We have asked your headteacher to plan improvements at a faster rate to help make the school even better. Finally, we have asked the governors to become more involved with the school. This will enable them to help you more.

Thank you again for your help with the inspection of your school. We wish you the very best for the future.