

Stocks Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118501
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326840
Inspection date	28 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	216
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	Paul Robertson
Headteacher	Susan Yeomans
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Leigh Road Hildenborough Tonbridge TN11 9AE
Telephone number	01732 832758
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the achievement and progress by pupils, particularly high attainers, in mathematics and writing
- the quality of teaching and use of assessment procedures to support learning in mathematics and writing
- how well the school checks its performance
- evidence of outstanding features of personal development
- how well the school promotes community cohesion.

Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons; pupils' work; discussions with pupils, the staff and chair of governors; and a scrutiny of school documents and parental questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a broadly average-sized primary school located in the rural village of Hildenborough. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one single-aged class. A privately-run nursery shares the school's site. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has been accredited with a range of awards including Quality Mark, Eco School, Healthy Schools and ActiveMark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stocks Green Primary is a good school with many strengths, most significantly the outstanding pastoral care which is reflected in the caring family setting. As one parent commented: 'It is a happy, well-run school with wonderfully caring staff who make sure my child is happy and contented at school.' Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in good attitudes and enthusiasm for school life. Many pupils were seen running eagerly into school at the start of the school day.

Because pupils are well taught they achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout the rest of the school. Children enter the school with the expected level of skills and knowledge. Due to good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, pupils continue to make good progress so that by the end of Year 2 they have achieved above average results in reading, writing and mathematics. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils have reached significantly above average standards in English and mathematics with many achieving outstanding results in both reading and science. Until recently, achievement in writing and the challenge for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 in mathematics have not been as high as results in reading and science. However, successful development in the teaching of writing is bringing about distinct improvement so that pupils, particularly the most able, are now making faster progress. The use of guided writing to help pupils structure their written text and greater opportunities to write in different subjects and genre have brought about significant improvements in their literacy skills. Although teaching is good overall, the school is keen to make it even better by further improving mathematics teaching in Years 3 to 6 so that a greater proportion of pupils achieve the higher Level 5 in mathematics. The provision of a well-resourced computer suite ensures that pupils have planned opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills (ICT), achieving good results. Due to good support provided by teaching assistants and well-planned provision pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same marked progress as others in their year groups.

Pupils' attitudes are a delight. Outstanding behaviour, good attitudes to school and high expectations are all significant factors in promoting progress. Attendance is above average and reflects the enjoyment that pupils have at school. Respect, good manners and good relationships with both adults and pupils are key features of pupils' good personal development and well-being. 'Teachers know us well, and help us to do our best...' pupils told inspectors, confident in the knowledge that an adult would provide support if they were worried about anything. All statutory requirements and procedures to ensure pupils' safety are in place and pupils are aware of how to stay safe.

A good range of extra-curricular activities, including an Early Morning Club, is enhanced by specialist French, music and drama, and sport, enriching the school's good thematic curriculum. These activities and the extensive well-developed grounds all help to make learning interesting and fun. Pupils are enthusiastic about the school's on-site 'allotment', pond and nature trail and spoke excitedly about the many opportunities to extend their first-hand scientific and eco knowledge as a result of planned, as well as informal, learning opportunities provided by the school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles, speaking knowledgeably about the benefits of exercise and a balanced diet. The content of lunch boxes and break time snacks reflect pupils' commitment to promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Pupils' progress is monitored well and interventions planned where there is a need. Well-developed links with parents and outside agencies ensure that all pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult, are well supported. The school is currently developing its approach to the setting of targets and the involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own learning. The setting of targets and use of assessment strategies in literacy have helped to accelerate pupils' progress, especially high attainers. Pupils enjoy working hard and although not all pupils in Years 3 to 6 have as yet enough knowledge and understanding of what they need to do to improve further their mathematics work, many benefit from the more general work targets which set high expectations and, for some, produce higher than average results.

There is a real sense of community in the school and pupils understand their local community well. They are expected to work and play cooperatively and responsibly and do so! Older pupils take their roles and responsibilities as members of the school council or playground buddies very seriously. Since the last inspection the provision of personal, social and health education (PSHE) has improved due to the development of specialist resources and a greater focus on PSHE and citizenship, and is now good. The implementation of a class 'Worry box' as part of this initiative is much appreciated by pupils. As a group of pupils said, 'it helps you to deal with how you and others feel and behave'. Pupils' ability to work hard, their self-confidence and the good standards they achieve mean they are well prepared for their future education.

The school promotes community cohesion through the developmental work that is done locally and through the successful conservation and charitable work. However, the school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good because there is not yet a formalised approach to the development of pupils' understanding of different communities in Britain or internationally. Nevertheless, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives a clear, effective lead, encouraging the full involvement of staff and governors from whom she receives good support in return. She has ensured the school has improved well, including improvements to accommodation and resources, since the last inspection. As a result of accurate and honest self-evaluation, leaders set suitably challenging whole-school improvement targets. Information about progress towards targets is used well to monitor and improve standards, for example in writing, with positive effects on pupils' achievement, especially the more able. Leaders and managers work well together to ensure that weaknesses are identified and tackled effectively.

Staff and governors undertake their individual responsibilities diligently and share a strong commitment to continued improvement. School governance has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Governors' greater awareness and expertise have enabled them to provide good support for the school whilst also being effective in their role of monitoring and holding the school to account. The school has good capacity to advance further because it is effectively led and managed.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start due to the well-planned, well-resourced and welcoming environment. Good teaching and a well-balanced curriculum ensure that they become happy, self-confident learners. As a result, children make good progress. All children achieve the expected goals by the time they complete the Reception year. Achievement in children's personal development is a particular strength. There is a good balance of adult-directed tasks and child-selected activities which extends beyond the classroom doors to a well-planned outdoor

learning area. As in the rest of the school, children's welfare is taken very seriously and promoted well. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well and areas for improvement are identified and acted on effectively. Improvements in the teaching of associating letters and sounds have already resulted in significant improvements in reading and writing. Teachers are developing good links with Year 1, which ensures a smooth transition at the end of the year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide even greater challenge in mathematics teaching, particularly in Years 3 to 6 so that high attainers reach standards significantly above age-related expectations.
- Develop the use of assessment and target-setting strategies to ensure that all pupils know and understand what they need to do to improve in mathematics.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of British as well as global societies, developing planning to provide a more structured approach.

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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?	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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

How good are 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	2

Leadership and management

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?	3
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**

30 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stocks Green Primary School, Hildenborough, TN11 9AE

I would like to thank you for your welcome when we came to visit your school. Your school is a good one and the hard work of your teachers, teaching assistants, governors and, in particular, your headteacher is helping it get even better. We think that your hard work is contributing to this. We are glad that you like school and were pleased to see that you know how to keep fit by getting lots of exercise. We enjoyed hearing about your Eco award and how much you enjoy your gardening area, pond and school grounds. It was also good to hear that you feel so safe and well looked after.

- These are some other things we found about your school.
- You make good progress in your learning particularly in reading and science.
- You achieve good standards in ICT.
- You are taught well and have good relationships with your teachers, who make your lessons interesting and fun.
- You are keen to improve your work and try hard to do this.
- You behave extremely well and care for one another.
- The adults in the school take very good care of you.

- We have asked staff and governors to do three things to help make your school even better:
- Find ways to ensure that those of you who sometimes find parts of mathematics lessons a bit too easy are challenged to reach even higher standards.
- Make sure that you all know your targets, especially in mathematics, and that you understand how to improve your work.
- Help you to find out more about different lifestyles in Britain as well as in other parts of the world.

We know you are proud of your school. You can help it to be even more successful by continuing to work hard at your own targets. We wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Wendy Forbes

Lead inspector