

Snitterfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125521
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	328349
Inspection date	5 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

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)	100
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	Abbe Sturman
Headteacher	Sue Ogden
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Road Snitterfield Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 0JL
Telephone number	01789 731301
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and its subsequent impact on children's early writing skills.
- The achievement of more capable pupils throughout the school.
- Standards in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.

Evidence was gathered from a wide range of school documentation, lesson observations, and interviews with the headteacher, staff and the chair of the governing body. Interviews were also held with parents and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a single-aged class. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Pupils' entitlement to a free school meal is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has experienced a number of issues relating to continuity of staffing but has now made a series of permanent appointments.

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. 'We are just like a big family', said one pupil speaking for many. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about all that the school has to offer: 'Our children are very happy here, everyone cares about one another and our children love coming to school.'

Standards are above average and pupils' achievements are good, but the best rates of progress are in Years 3 to 6 where there are examples of outstanding teaching. By the end of Year 6, standards are very high in English and pupils' achievements are outstanding in speaking, listening and reading. In writing, pupils' achievements are good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Standards in mathematics and science are above average and pupils' achievements are good but in both subjects the pupils' problem-solving skills are relative weaknesses. In science, too few opportunities are provided for them to form hypotheses, predict and evaluate outcomes of experiments. Throughout the school, assessment information is not always used well enough to help staff plan to move pupils on in their learning. More capable pupils, at times, are not sufficiently challenged and their rates of progress are satisfactory rather than good because not enough is expected of them.

In Years 1 and 2, due to the return of the permanent teacher after a period of long term absence and the stability that this has brought to pupils, rates of progress are improving, especially in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. Progress in writing is satisfactory and not as good as that seen in speaking and listening because pupils are having to learn correct letter formation, a skill which should have been acquired in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with understanding and skills appropriate for their age. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning other than personal, social and emotional development where progress is good and sets the foundations of good behaviour around the school. Nevertheless, opportunities are missed to develop writing skills. Furthermore, observations undertaken of children's learning are not informative enough and are not sufficiently well evaluated to identify the next steps of learning.

Pupils behave well throughout the school and attendance is good. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good due to good care, guidance and support and exciting learning opportunities. The curriculum is well planned and includes good opportunities to develop thinking skills and creativity, as well as good knowledge of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe. A very good range of activities are provided after school and these enable pupils to enjoy learning and develop good attitudes towards education. Such activities also support the development of pupils' social skills and contribute to their getting on with others. The development of such skills ensures that the pupils are well prepared for later life.

- The heart of the school's success lies with the good leadership and management of the headteacher who has enabled her staff to see their true potential. Her accurate evaluations of the school's strengths and weaknesses and constant quest to improve on previous best performance have created a culture of high achievement. 'You can't stand still here. There is always room for improvement', said one member of staff. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching in this school is characterised by aspects of outstanding practice in Years 3 to 6 where teachers are so passionate about their craft that they have pupils sitting on the edge of their seats fixated on learning. 'Is freedom worth dying for
- ' was a question the oldest pupils were asked to debate in their history lesson and subsequently wrote from the heart. This clearly demonstrated their emotional engagement

in learning and produced exceptionally high quality writing. However, pupils' written work in their books is often untidy and does not match their good achievement because teachers too readily accept work that is clearly not the pupils' best. Marking is satisfactory overall with the best marking seen in Years 5 and 6 where pupils are given opportunities to comment on what they found easy or difficult.

Pupils are well cared for and safeguarding procedures, including health and safety and risk assessments, are good. Pupils are acutely sensible on icy surfaces in inclement weather and, if in need, know that there is an adult that they can go to for help. Pupils have good links with the local community, and they participate fully in school and village life. They are actively corresponding with pupils from Sierra Leone and Thailand. This contributes well to their awareness of the global community, and reflects the school's effective promotion of community cohesion. Secure networks with learning clusters and outside agencies, including Creative Partnerships, ensure that the pupils have access to the support they need in order to be well prepared for secondary school.

Governors offer good support and challenge and are actively involved in all aspects of school life. They ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum and are especially vigilant that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive their full entitlement and are accepted as valued members of the school community. They review their decision on budget implications in light of outcomes and are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. The good leadership and management and governance have created a successful learning community with high standards, good achievement and determination to do even better. The appointment of an assistant headteacher has helped raise standards due to her effective practice both in the classroom and in putting policy into practice. Pupils annually exceed their targets and the school capacity to improve is good as evidenced by its track record of high standards and pupils' accelerated progress in information and communication technology.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Good features are apparent in provision for outdoor play and children's outcomes in personal, social and emotional development, which exceed expectations. Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Not enough is done in sharing information about children's achievement and their next steps of learning because assessment procedures are underdeveloped. This further restricts the ability of staff to effectively plan children's next steps in learning and prevents progress from being any better than satisfactory. Children learn using their senses such as in making soup and in building and using clay. However, valuable learning opportunities are missed in developing writing skills through play. This has a knock-on effect in Year 2 where pupils struggle with writing and not all of them can form their letters correctly. Teaching is satisfactory with strengths in the good relationships between staff and children. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvement is being made as a result of self-review, such as the implementation of a handwriting scheme. Children are safe and secure due to good welfare arrangements and are valued by the staff for their uniqueness.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that information from assessment of children's play informs the next steps of learning and that more opportunities are given to children to improve their writing.

- Ensure that assessment for learning is used at all times to challenge all groups of pupils, especially those capable of higher attainment.
- Raise standards in mathematics and science by providing more opportunities for problem-solving in mathematics and the set-up and evaluation of experiments in science.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' written work throughout the school.

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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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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	2
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	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	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?	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**

6 February 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Snitterfield Primary School, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 0JL

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school. In spite of the snow, many of you turned up for your lessons and you seemed to be having a great time playing in the snow at break time.

You attend a good school. You learn well and make exceptional progress in speaking, listening and reading, and you are well prepared for secondary school. You attain very high standards in English and high standards in mathematics and science. You are well looked after by a very caring staff who ensure that you are learning in a safe environment. Teaching in your school is good and we saw several examples of outstanding practice in Years 3 to 6. Your teachers provide you with a very good range of clubs and after-school activities. We are glad that you enjoy them so much. Your headteacher and governing body work very hard and provide good leadership. This has helped your school improve even more since the last inspection. You are growing up to be good ambassadors of your school. For example, you do some really good work in the village by gardening and exploring eco friendly issues.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to work on a few things to make your school even better. We want them to look closely at your work, evaluate it and use this information to help you make even better progress, especially those of you who find learning easy. You can help by continuing to do your best in lessons. Those of you who are in the Reception class can have a go at forming your letters correctly when you write. Those of you who are older would benefit from having more opportunities to solve problems in mathematics and set up and evaluate your experiments in science. All of you need to present your work in books neatly as some of the books we saw did not reflect your best efforts.

We wish you all the very best in the future.

Yours faithfully

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

Lead inspector