

Stockingford Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125543
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	328354
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Barbara Atcheson

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	2679
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	David Rhodes
Headteacher	Gwyneth Evans
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cross Street Stockingford Nuneaton CV10 8JH
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large infant school where the vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is higher than average. The school has a designated provision for speech and language, with places for 10 pupils, who are integrated throughout the school. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) into one of the three Reception classes. The school shares a site with the junior school and the local Early Years Centre, which houses a children's centre, a parents' centre, a local authority nursery and a library.

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. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. The school's aim is: 'Learning together, growing together, pursuing excellence.' Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, senior leaders have successfully united the whole staff in a concerted effort to put this aim into practice. Pupils and staff share a positive attitude towards improvement. The achievement of all pupils, including those within the designated speech and language provision, is good because pupils are well taught. They follow an exciting, innovative curriculum and receive exceptional care, guidance and support.

At the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is above the national average in reading and mathematics, but lower than average in writing. The school has been quick to recognise this and has put together a carefully thought out action plan to raise standards and improve achievement in a stimulating way. Children in the EYFS receive an excellent start to their education because learning is exciting and the quality of teaching is outstanding. The school has built on this good practice. It has strengthened links across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2, and reorganised the school day so that it is easier for pupils to make connections in their learning through meaningful opportunities that enhance their literacy skills. This is a new departure for the school and, as such, it has not had time to have full impact on raising achievement and standards. However, in this first term, the indications are that progress has accelerated and learning is becoming more secure.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and feel a part of the learning process. One parent, reflecting the views of many, said, 'Great atmosphere with enthusiastic staff and children, a pleasure to be involved with the school.' Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. The school is a harmonious, happy community where behaviour is excellent. Pupils are polite and considerate and play an outstanding role in the school and wider community. They have a very good understanding of how to keep healthy and clearly know how to stay safe.

Leadership and management are good. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning means that the school leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is performing and what it needs to do to improve. However, points for improvement in teaching and learning are not always sharply focused on increasing the challenge for more able pupils. Although recently implemented, the actions that have brought about improvements so far bode well for the future. Together with the school's well-considered actions to address the issues from the previous inspection, the school's capacity to improve is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The EYFS learning areas are creative and exciting spaces that successfully promote children's enjoyment of learning. Children are happy, enthusiastic, settled and confident in this welcoming environment. One parent, reflecting the views of many, wrote, 'I could not have asked for a better start to my daughter's school life.' On entry to the Reception classes, children's language skills are less well developed than usually found in children of this age. In all other areas of development, their skills are close to those levels. Progress is good in all areas of learning, but

outstanding in their language development. Consequently, by the time they start Year 1, the majority reach the expected standards in all areas of learning, including language development.

Thorough, regular assessments mean that children's learning is closely matched to their needs. An imaginatively planned curriculum is organised into three learning areas to promote learning in language and mathematical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Children and parents like the fact that they spend planned amounts of time in these areas each week.

Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. It challenges children and helps them to become inquisitive and independent, moving easily from one activity to another and happily asking for help when they need it. The outdoor learning space is limited and the leadership has identified this as an area for improvement. However, it has been imaginatively resourced and developed, with exciting activities and experiences. Communication with parents is excellent. Leadership is outstanding and the quality of provision reflects the high expectations and the excellent teamwork that exists between all adults.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the proportion of pupils who reach the higher Level 3, particularly in writing.
- Ensure that points for improvement in teaching and learning are sharply focused in order to eliminate inconsistencies and improve pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress overall and achieve well. Children join the school with the skills and knowledge close to those expected for children of a similar age, although there are weaknesses in their language development. Outstanding provision in the EYFS, coupled with the benefits that the school receives from the designated speech and language provision, ensures that these children make good progress overall and outstanding progress in their communication, language and literacy skills. As a result, the majority reach the goals set for the end of Reception. Although satisfactory, their progress is slower in Years 1 and 2 so that standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in 2008, the proportion of more able pupils who reached the higher levels was above average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the designated speech and language provision make good and often outstanding progress from a low base, because of the highly skilled and very effective support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and is reflected in excellent behaviour, the respect that pupils have for each other and how well they cooperate in lessons. Experiences in assembly develop pupils' spirituality in an exceptional way. Pupils are courteous and friendly. They benefit from the integration of pupils from the designated speech and language provision and are caring and sensitive towards them. Pupils play amicably in the playground and move sensibly around the school. They enjoy their learning and are keen to contribute to whole-class discussions. Pupils are rarely inattentive and only lose concentration on the few occasions when tasks are too difficult or too easy.

Pupils' understanding of how to keep healthy is excellent and they clearly know how to keep safe. One pupil reported, 'You need to drink lots of water to keep your brain going.' They say that there are 'one or two rough boys' but are unaware of any bullying or unkind behaviour. School council members take their responsibilities extremely seriously. Attendance is broadly average and has improved since the last inspection.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Although teaching is good overall, there is some outstanding teaching in all year groups. The excellent relationships between teachers and pupils have a positive impact on attitudes to learning. Teachers work hard to plan interesting activities based on pupils' previous learning. With a focus on writing, experiences are planned to stimulate pupils' imagination and so improve standards. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed watching sparklers burn and pupils in Year 1 excitedly crawled into a dark 'bears' den'. As a result, many pupils now write at length, which reflects their increasing confidence. Teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is excellent. Teachers keep parents well informed and report pupils' levels to them each term. Systematic assessment procedures give teachers a good understanding of each pupil's progress, although higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is innovative, creative and relevant. It develops pupils as independent learners, preparing them well for their future lives. Creative activities and work in music and dance underpin pupils' literacy work, giving them a real understanding of characters. It excites them so much that they cannot wait to get their ideas down on paper. The learning environment with rooms specifically resourced to develop mathematical and literacy skills, creativity and an understanding of the world motivate and stimulate pupils to learn. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is outstanding. A wide range of clubs, visits and visitors significantly enhances pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents say that their children feel safe at school. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Risk assessments, including those of pupils' behaviours, are thorough and detailed. Partnerships with external agencies are outstanding. For example, strong links between physiotherapists, occupational therapists and educational staff remove barriers to learning for pupils and enable them to become more independent. The external support for pupils with autism is first-rate and enables them to achieve well. Induction and transition arrangements are excellent. In particular, home visits are used very effectively to discover how children learn and this information is fed into planning to raise their achievement. The designated speech and language provision not only supports its own pupils effectively, but also makes a positive contribution to the school. Pupils within the unit profit from the well-targeted support and as a result, integrate seamlessly into the school. Pupils' progress over time is tracked meticulously, and this information is used effectively to set targets to raise pupils' achievement. Parents say that their children feel safe at school. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Risk assessments, including

those of pupils' behaviours, are thorough and detailed. Partnerships with external agencies are outstanding. For example, strong links between physiotherapists, occupational therapists and educational staff remove barriers to learning for pupils and enable them to become more independent. The external support for pupils with autism is first-rate and enables them to achieve well. Induction and transition arrangements are excellent. In particular, home visits are used very effectively to discover how children learn and this information is fed into planning to raise their achievement. The designated speech and language provision not only supports its own pupils effectively, but also makes a positive contribution to the school. Pupils within the unit profit from the well-targeted support and as a result, integrate seamlessly into the school. Pupils' progress over time is tracked meticulously, and this information is used effectively to set targets to raise pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has established a clear direction for the school. A well-structured improvement plan has engaged all members of staff in its implementation. Consequently, there is a high level of commitment and shared understanding of the school's goals. Plans to improve the proportion of pupils who reach Level 3, particularly in writing, are relevant and innovative, but have yet to have an impact on raising standards. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are thorough, although points for improvement do not always make it clear what teachers have to do to improve the progress of more able pupils. Governors play an active and effective role in the work of the school and as a result, they have a comprehensive picture of what goes on in school and the impact of their decisions. The ethos of the school promotes excellent personal development. The integration of pupils from the designated speech and language provision demonstrates the highly inclusive nature of the school. Community cohesion is outstanding. The school has forged links with the junior school and Early Years Centre, which share the site. Joint strategic meetings provide strong support for families and a seamless continuity for children as they pass through each phase of their education.

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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?	1
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?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/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?	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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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 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

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	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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**

3 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Stockingford Infant School, Stockingford, CV10 8JH

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed us to your school for the recent inspection. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing the exciting work that you do. You have given us lots of helpful information. We think your school is a good school. Some of the things it does are outstanding!

These are the things you do well:

- children make an excellent start in the Reception classes
- you make good progress in your work and achieve well
- you behave well and are polite and thoughtful about others
- your teachers plan your learning in an exciting way and provide you with a wide range of opportunities to develop your skills and interests
- the headteacher, senior leaders and governors manage the school well and everyone who looks after you so expertly really cares about everything that you do.

The school is working hard to make things even better for you. We have asked the school to do two things:

- make sure that those of you who find work easy are able to try harder things, especially in writing
- help teachers to get even better at planning the right sort of work that will help you all to work hard and do your very best, all of the time.

We hope that you will all continue to enjoy coming to school and to try your hardest so that you are successful in the future. Remember that it is important that you attend as often as you possibly can if you are to do your very best.

We wish you continuing success.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Atcheson