

Stourport Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135038
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	329008
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2009
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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)	264
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	Julie Holmes
Headteacher	Jacqui Elwis
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Tan Lane Stourport-on-Severn DY13 8HD
Telephone number	01299 822120
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school opened in 2007 and serves part of the town of Stourport-on-Severn. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is above average and the great majority of these pupils are from Traveller families of Irish, Romany or Gypsy heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, while the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school is moving to new buildings in 2011.

Tan Lane pre-school nursery and Stourport Out of School club, which are not managed by the school's governing body, also operate on the site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stourport Primary is a good school. A good curriculum and good teaching ensure that pupils are achieving well. Standards in almost all years were below average when the school opened but pupils have made good progress in the past two years, regardless of their backgrounds or needs, and are leaving the school in Year 6 with standards that are now average.

Progress is good in most years and subjects, although it is satisfactory in reading in Years 1 to 6 and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum provides a strong focus on improving basic skills in most respects, but the time allocated to reading in class is not used effectively enough to boost pupils' progress. There are some examples of exemplary marking and use of targets in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 that point out exactly what pupils need to do to improve their work. However, while the marking in Years 1 and 2 is frequent, it tends to praise rather than inform pupils what they need to do next, or provide a clear target which they can aim to meet. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported through well thought out strategies and make progress that is equally as good as that of their peers. Excellent provision for pupils from Traveller communities ensures that they are not disadvantaged when they go travelling, and they too make good progress.

The good academic support that pupils receive is matched by the quality of pastoral care, and this results in pupils' good personal development. Teachers and other support staff are adept at managing behaviour in a quietly effective manner. School rules are enforced rigorously, so pupils develop a good sense of right and wrong, and they understand the impact their behaviour can have on others. They show great respect for each other's heritage and backgrounds, and all get on well together. Parents confirm their children are happy at school. In lessons, pupils are attentive and keen to learn.

Strong leadership from the headteacher and governors has forged staff into a highly effective team since the school was opened. Checks on teaching and the tracking of pupils' progress provide a clear picture of where strengths and weakness in provision lie. However, the results of such monitoring are not yet being used to disseminate the good practice already evident in some areas. Plans are now in place to spread such practice, to enable the quality of education provided to be consistently of the highest standard. The rapidly improving standards and achievement are clear evidence of the school's good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children do well in the Reception class. They join with skills and knowledge that are below those expected for their age and after a year are ready to start Year 1 with standards that are broadly average. Good progress is made because teachers plan a wide range of activities aimed at promoting learning equally in all areas of learning, with a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those that children plan for themselves. Learning is particularly effective in the bright and stimulating indoor environment, where early reading and number work are promoted very well. Adults never miss an opportunity to develop these skills, such as by asking the milk monitor to work out how many children were missing after they had distributed the milk. The outdoor area is less inviting and its use is not planned to cover all areas of learning, particularly writing where progress is slower than in other areas. Personal development is a strong theme in planning activities. Adults set a good example in their relationships with each

other and the children, so the children quickly learn to work and play happily with one another. However, they are equally content working on their own and demonstrate good levels of independence when taking responsibility in lessons. Good leadership and management ensure that children thrive in a safe and welcoming environment. Areas for improvement are identified and tackled so that standards are improving year-on-year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Review the planning of time allocated to reading in Years 1 to 6, so that it consistently and effectively supports and consolidates pupils' reading skills.
- Ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given better guidance and targets in mathematics, so they know what they need to improve and what they are aiming for.
- Use the examples of good practice evident in the school to raise the quality of teaching in all classes to that of the very best.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school has focused its work over the past year on improving pupils' progress in writing. This has been very successful and pupils now make good progress across Years 1 to 6. Progress in information and communication technology (ICT) is also consistently good and pupils' standards are above average. Progress in reading and mathematics is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, so standards remain below average at the end of Year 2. However, pupils forge ahead in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 so that standards improve and are average by the time they leave. Standards in English are also average, although this masks a difference between reading and writing. The consistently good progress in writing means that standards are now slightly above average. Progress in reading is slower, but still satisfactory, so standards remain slightly below average. The work and resources provided for pupils from Traveller communities when they go travelling ensure that the impact of the time lost at school is minimised. They receive intensive support when they return which helps them to catch up with their peers. The good progress pupils make in their basic skills and ICT, together with their good attitudes to work, ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are polite and well behaved. They pay good attention to their teachers in lessons, although do not always listen when their peers are speaking. Pupils get on well with one another in lessons and around the school. They are safety conscious and feel safe, having great confidence that staff will address any concerns they have. Pupils are keen on sports and very active at playtimes. They make healthy choices in both school meals and the packed lunches and snacks they bring to school. They have an exceptional knowledge of the cultural heritage and lives led by Travellers in this country, but are less aware of how other people in circumstances different from their own live their lives. Pupils are quick to take responsibility around school and volunteer for activities in the local community. They have been heavily involved with the planning of the new buildings and have put forward sensible and effective ideas for the architects to consider. Most pupils attend regularly, but overall attendance is below the national average because of the time lost when some go travelling. When they are not on the road, the attendance of pupils from Traveller communities is well above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned to ensure that pupils make gains in learning at a good pace. Whole-class introductions set the scene, so all know what they are going to be learning about. Pupils are quickly moved on to activities in groups. However, they often start with a task that is similar for all pupils, regardless of their differing ability levels. The more able are expected to complete this quickly and then move on to a more demanding task, which they do, but their progress is held back by not having a more demanding task in the first place. This aside, teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve and how well they will behave. Learning support assistants (LSAs) are used well to support a variety of groups, rather than confining themselves to working with the least able. This ensures that all groups of pupils benefit equally from staff expertise.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good account is taken of pupils' needs when planning the curriculum. Classes and year groups are arranged in different combinations throughout the day so that the curriculum can be best matched to the differing needs of groups of pupils. Those falling behind are quickly targeted for extra support, either individually or in small groups, so they can make up the ground lost. Good attention is paid to developing personal skills as well as those in academic subjects such as mathematics and writing. However, the time spent organising books and reading diaries often means that little time is left for actually reading in the morning sessions. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to use their ICT skills in other subjects, but this is not always the case with their reading, writing and numeracy skills, although plans are in place to address this. The many trips and visitors add a great deal to the basic curriculum, particularly in supporting pupils' good personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good support for different groups of pupils. This is particularly true for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers and LSAs are very knowledgeable about such pupils' specific needs and focus well on their targets for improvement in lessons. Good links are maintained with a wide range of external agencies that provide specialist help, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from Traveller families. Pupils' welfare is given a suitably high priority. Child protection and safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. Pupils' progress is tracked well, and the resulting information is used to set challenging targets for their performance. These work particularly well in Years 5 and 6, where they are backed up by high quality marking and guidance. Lower down the school, pupils are less sure of what they have to do to meet their targets, which are often set for a group rather than the individual.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's approach of setting up teams of staff to lead on important aspects of its work is effective. Staff are keen to take on responsibility and the system ensures that staff are accountable for the results of the initiatives on which they lead. Equality is at the heart of the school's work. The progress of different groups is tracked well and actions to raise the standards of those underachieving, such as those eligible for free school meals, have proved successful. The overall contribution to community cohesion is currently satisfactory. The school works well with the local community and has particularly strong links with parents that may feel least comfortable in dealing with the school, although links with other areas of the country and beyond are not yet so well developed. The school's leaders use a wide range of approaches to check the quality of education provided, and these lead to accurate evaluations of its strengths and areas where improvements can still be made. There are some inconsistencies in practice across the school, so leaders have plans to use the best practice as examples of what everyone can aim for.

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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	NA
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	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?	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	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	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**

1 July 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Stourport Primary School, Stourport-on-Severn, DY13 8HD

Thank you for your help when we visited your school. We really enjoyed hearing about what you liked and what you would change, although there wasn't much that you disliked. Your parents and carers can be very proud of your behaviour and good manners. It was good to see so many of you eating healthily and enjoying your physical education and sport. So, well done to you all!

You go to a good school. You do well in most of your subjects and leave Year 6 with standards that are similar to most other children in England. You are particularly good at ICT, but could still do better in your reading. So, we have asked your teachers to make sure you use your 'ERIC' time to do more reading. You can help too, by settling down for a good read as quickly as you can. Those of you in Years 5 and 6 do really well in your mathematics, because the teachers tell you exactly what you need to do to improve and how to do it. We have asked all the other teachers to do the same, so that pupils in Years 1 and 2 in particular can make progress that is just as good. You are interested in the work you do in lessons, and if you do start to daydream, your teachers are quick to get you concentrating again. All the adults in school know you well. They are there for you when you feel unhappy, and you told us that they always help you when you need it. This makes you feel safe at school.

All the adults at school want the best for you. They check how well you are doing and are quick to help anyone who is struggling with their work. They know that some of you need more help than others at times, and have lots of ways of giving you the support you need. The people who run the school are making it better and better. They know what helps you learn more quickly and where things can be improved. We have asked them to share the really good bits around more, so that you always get the very best possible education.

With all best wishes for your futures

Yours faithfully

David Driscoll

Lead inspector