

Stamford Park Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106285
Local Authority	Trafford
Inspection number	336650
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Philip Martin

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 of pupils on the school roll	272
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr J Lamb
Headteacher	Mrs Cathryn Downing
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and held meetings with staff, a governor and groups of pupils. They had discussions with pupils in meetings arranged for that purpose, in class and on the playground. They scrutinised samples of pupils' work, observed the school at work, and looked at its safeguarding procedures and other policies and records of meetings. The team analysed the 87 responses received to the questionnaires sent out to parents as well as a sample of those returned by pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well the school has maintained the positive features noted in the previous inspection report
- whether the progress of all groups is fast enough in English, mathematics and science and is supported by the school's use of assessment to support learning
- the quality and effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures
- the effectiveness of leaders at all levels, particularly the senior leadership team, in evaluating, guiding and improving outcomes.

Information about the school

Stamford Park Junior School is larger than the average junior school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. A large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, and the others come from a wide range of different ethnic groups. A very small minority of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language spoken. Very few pupils come to school at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, as is the percentage with a statement of special educational need. The school has a number of awards including a Silver Eco-Award, Artsmark, Active Mark Gold, a National Healthy Schools Award and a British Council International Award. A privately run out-of-school care club shares the school premises. This was inspected in May 2009 by a different team. Its report can be read separately on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to ensuring that the single central record of safeguarding checks made on staff at the school fully meets requirements. The school has failed to keep up-to-date records of safeguarding checks in the required manner. This is a serious failing, though the inspection team found no evidence that any harm came to pupils as a result. The omission also indicates that the otherwise good care, guidance and support overall is inadequate. Governors have failed in their duty to ensure that statutory requirements have been met.

The school provides an acceptable standard of education. Pupils start school with standards that are significantly higher than average. Most also bring outstanding personal qualities such as excellent behaviour, a willingness to learn, enthusiasm, ambition and an appreciation of the value of education. These qualities stand pupils in good stead and help to ensure that they make the most of their time in school, understand how to avoid unnecessary risks and lead healthy lifestyles. As a result, they make good progress, particularly in their personal development, and enjoy many of the activities they take part in. Standards of attainment are still high when they leave school, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Whilst teaching is satisfactory, it does not always offer enough challenge to ensure that all pupils are motivated and engaged as much as they could be. Consequently, they do not develop sufficiently some of the higher learning and independence skills required. The curriculum satisfactorily meets pupils' needs and helps them to maintain high standards of attainment in the key subjects. It also helps to develop their understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. It does not, however, encourage enough independence or creativity in learning, because some aspects in a range of subjects are not closely tailored enough to pupils' individual needs.

The relatively recently formed senior leadership team has been developing its role. It is beginning to implement and drive forward the headteacher's ambitious vision for improvement, focusing on enhancing pupils' progress and experiences. The team satisfactorily monitors and evaluates the school's effectiveness, drawing out relevant priorities for development. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection and offer a satisfactory level of challenge. Consequently, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

The school has informally considered its current satisfactory contribution to promoting

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community cohesion and has produced an aspirational statement of what it intends to do in the future, but current developments are at an early stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that safeguarding requirements are fully met, that care, guidance and support is improved, and that the governing body fulfils its statutory duties by:
 - completing, as a matter of urgency, the required records with all the necessary information.
- Raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan work that stimulates, challenges and enthuses all pupils.
- Improve the quality of the curriculum from satisfactory to good by:
 - planning a curriculum which encourages independent learning and creativity, and which closely matches all pupils' needs in all areas.
- Develop the school's wider contribution to community cohesion by:
 - implementing the ideas outlined in the statement of intent.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Boys' and girls' outstanding achievement results from their maintenance of high standards in English, mathematics and science combined with their enjoyment of most aspects of school. Evidence from the inspection team's lesson observations, discussions with pupils and an examination of pupils' work, past and present, shows that pupils maintain the high standards with which they start school. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. However, pupils learn well and make good progress because of their overwhelmingly positive attitudes to school and understanding of the importance of learning. They talk about how much they enjoy school, singling out a range of subjects and enrichment activities. A typical comment in the pupils' questionnaires was, 'I love this school'. A few feel that their work sometimes lacks interest or challenge, for example, when they go over the same text repeatedly. A small minority declared that they felt 'bored' in a numeracy lesson because they considered they were capable of more challenging work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are identified quickly and their needs are analysed and addressed. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to other pupils because of their effective inclusion in lessons. The very few pupils who come to school with no, or very little, spoken English make very good progress. They explained clearly and articulately to inspectors how well the school has supported them. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6, including provisional results for 2009, confirm the high attainment.

Pupils demonstrate a high level of understanding when talking about staying safe and being healthy. They are informed about the value and importance of achieving a balanced diet and know what this should contain. Pupils declare that they feel safe and

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are very emphatic that there is no bullying, sexist or racist behaviour. They are confident that any such behaviour would be dealt with swiftly and fairly. This is reflected in their own excellent behaviour and good level of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Responses to the pupils' questionnaires reinforce these judgements. Pupils undertake responsibilities willingly and are involved in a satisfactory range of activities in the wider community, such as collecting food for the Salvation Army and the choir singing at various locations. The school council considers some minor issues but has little independence or impact on the more extended issues.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Although pupils make good progress in their learning, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This is because teachers do not use assessment information precisely enough to plan activities that cater for the needs of all pupils. Consequently, pupils are not all challenged, motivated and engaged as much as they could be and as a result, do not develop sufficiently the higher learning skills of which they are capable. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils resulting in a positive learning atmosphere. This

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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supports pupils' personal development well. Teachers provide satisfactory support, picking up on concerns and offering useful advice. In many cases, teaching assistants provide helpful support for individuals and groups of lower ability pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils consequently make good progress. Despite these positive features, lessons do not fully capitalise on pupils' outstanding attitudes to school. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop learning skills, such as, asking their own questions and finding ways to answer them. This means that pupils do not develop independent learning skills as well as they might and sometimes a few pupils are disengaged through no fault of their own. The curriculum helps pupils to reach high levels of literacy and numeracy skills in these specific lessons. However, pupils do not always use these skills in other subjects across the curriculum. The school is working on ways of making literacy and numeracy links between subjects, but this is at an early stage of development. Some work is too dependent on worksheets that do not offer enough challenge, or take individual needs fully into account. This was clearly seen in a series of lessons on the 'Ancient Romans' which was almost entirely completed on such worksheets. The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy the range of enrichment activities and clubs provided. This reinforces the pupils' positive attitudes to school and helps to support their learning. The school provides a good range of activities for pupils who are gifted in mathematics.

The school's failure to meet statutory requirements in recording the details of the checks it makes on the suitability of staff leads to an inadequate judgement for care, guidance and support. Other required procedures and policies are robust and fully in place. In all other respects staff look after pupils very well so they feel safe, comfortable and ready to learn. Pupils with particular challenges to their learning are very well looked after. Their needs are quickly determined and no effort spared to support them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of the school and its work. Other members of the senior leadership team are satisfactorily developing their understanding of this vision and how, as a team, they can implement it. Senior leaders carry out some evaluations of the school's work through an analysis of test results, lesson observations and examining pupils' work. These evaluations, though satisfactory,

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sometimes lack enough rigour in terms of the points for improvement. The school has maintained high standards of attainment and in pupils' personal development and well-being since the previous inspection. Pupils' personal development is promoted successfully by the partnerships the school has with other agencies. This is clearly seen in the support the school draws upon to help pupils who arrive at the school with little or no spoken English and in the welfare of potentially vulnerable pupils. This emphasises the school's commitment to inclusion of all pupils in their learning as well as ensuring a satisfactory equality of opportunities.

The school has begun to measure its impact on promoting community cohesion. It is forging links with schools in other countries and some pupils have begun electronic communication with pupils in these schools. It is too early to judge the impact of this work, but the school has a 'statement of intent', which draws on an analysis of what it is already doing and outlines plans for its next steps.

The governing body generally offers a sound level of challenge and support to the school in full and committee meetings. Most statutory requirements are met, but governors have failed in the important task of ensuring that the record of staffing suitability checks has been in order and its effectiveness is, therefore, inadequate.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The parents who responded to a questionnaire about their views show that they are overwhelmingly positive about those aspects included and many strongly agreed with most points. They responded most positively to the views that their children enjoy

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school, a typical comment being '.. my children are exceptionally happy at school'. They feel that their children are kept safe, and that they learn how to lead healthy lifestyles. The inspection team agrees with these views. A very small minority of parents felt that they did not get enough information about their children's progress or that their children do not make enough progress. The inspection team found that procedures for communicating with parents were satisfactory and that pupils' progress is generally good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stamford Park Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 272 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	127	71	51	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	136	76	43	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	70	40	87	50	11	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	91	52	75	43	8	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	99	56	72	41	4	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	64	37	99	57	6	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	106	60	71	40	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	88	51	77	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	93	53	70	40	6	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	84	49	77	45	7	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	43	87	51	2	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	110	63	59	34	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	131	73	44	25	4	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



Inspection of Stamford Park Junior School, Hale, WA15 9JB

I would like to thank you for the welcome you gave to my colleagues and me when we inspected your school. I would particularly like to thank those of you who spoke with inspectors and those who completed the questionnaire.

I found many positive things about your school. I was very impressed by your positive attitudes to school and your willingness to learn. This was very evident from what we observed, from what you told the inspectors in discussions and through the questionnaire. The teaching in many of the lessons we saw during the inspection was good, although it was only satisfactory in others. An examination of your work shows that teaching is satisfactory in general. Your teachers are helpful, though we found lessons could be even better if they were more interesting and encouraged you to be more independent. In the same way, the curriculum, the knowledge and skills that you learn, needs to be more closely matched to what each of you is capable of. It should also build on your interests more than it does.

Whilst the school helps you to learn about different cultures and ways of life, it needs to do even more to help you to gain a greater understanding of these.

It is important that your school keeps proper records of all the people who work there. Whilst your school has collected all the necessary information, it was not kept in the way that it should have been. This is a serious matter so I have given your school a Notice to Improve. This means that other inspectors will visit the school in the next few months to make sure that the required changes have been carried out.

I have asked the school to do the following things to make it better than it is now:

- make sure that the information it has about staff is kept correctly
- improve teaching by planning interesting lessons that help you to develop learning and independence skills
- make the curriculum more interesting and exciting for all of you
- do all it can to make sure that it has good links with the world around us.

You can help by continuing to try your best at all times.

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