

# Stuart Road Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113288
<b>Local Authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	338137
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Carnaghan

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	224
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs J West
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Frame
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Palmerston Street Stoke Plymouth PL1 5LL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 567668
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<b>Email address</b>	srps@plymouth.gov.uk

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## Introduction

### Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent most of their time looking at learning, saw eight teachers, visited 13 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, plans, assessments and other records as well as 91 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well teaching, especially in Key Stage 2, promotes pupils' progress
- the way monitoring by leaders and governors helps improve standards
- how successful the school has been in raising English standards.

## Information about the school

Stuart Road Primary School has fewer than average pupils from minority ethnic groups and almost all speak English as their first language. The school has a slightly below average, but growing, proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The largest group of these pupils has speech, language and communication difficulties. Stuart Road holds the International School Award.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Stuart Road Primary School provides a satisfactory education and is a happy and improving school that cares for pupils well. Falling standards in 2009 were a clarion call to the school leadership. The headteacher and staff reacted vigorously and have implemented a number of reforms. Much more thorough assessment is already having a positive impact on pupils' progress, which is now satisfactory. Improvements in teaching are coming more slowly because of a number of staff changes and because monitoring of teaching has not been sharp enough. Standards are average and the achievement of pupils, including those who have speech, learning and communication difficulties, is satisfactory.

Teaching is satisfactory and there is much to admire in lessons. Pupils enjoy their work, behave well and work hard. Many topics are very well planned and interesting. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils are too low and the pace of lessons diminishes. Teachers mark books well but pupils' targets are often too broad to promote strong progress. The lively, interesting curriculum combines subjects constructively to make learning more enjoyable. Outstanding links with schools and organisations locally, nationally and across the globe mean that pupils' learning experiences are greatly enriched.

Pupils, parents and carers like the school. One parent, typical of many, commented: 'They support children of various learning abilities with friendly happy staff with lots of patience and warmth.' Good links with parents help to keep them well informed. All staff nurture pupils well in this secure environment. Pupils facing emotional, physical or other barriers to learning are very well supported and the school's strong partnerships are well utilised to provide additional help.

The school's judicious use of outside expertise, particularly from the local authority, has done a great deal to develop a more accurate evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and to enable it to move forward. Planning for the future is ambitious, practical and thorough. The impact of the relatively recent reforms has yet not been fully felt; however, pupils' progress and standards have started to rise. Good systems are firmly in place to enable the school to continue improving and its capacity for the future is satisfactory.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' standards and achievement by June 2011 by:
  - ensuring more lessons have high expectations and good pace

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- providing pupils with clear, individual targets for improvement.
- Monitor teaching more rigorously by July 2010 to address areas of weakness.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

The school has made a concerted effort to address falling Key Stage 2 standards. More systematic use of assessment information to boost progress is beginning to pay dividends, and lesson observations and analysis of the school's data indicates that pupils are currently making satisfactory progress. Their standards have improved to be similar to those found nationally. Given that starting points are below average at the beginning of Year 1, pupils' achievement, including those who have speech, language and other difficulties, is satisfactory. Improvements in standards and progress have been slower than hoped because the school has faced staffing difficulties recently.

The school has correctly been concerned about pupils' standards in English. Developing reading skills and broadening opportunities for writing, including introducing topics that are more attractive to boys, has led to better writing standards across the school and a closing of the gap in other subjects. For example, both boys and girls in Year 6 were enthusiastic about writing a report because it was to be recorded and 'broadcast' in a subsequent lesson.

A strong contribution to progress is made by pupils' consistently mature behaviour. They enjoy school and are keen, receptive learners. Pupils are well briefed on personal safety and have developed an understanding of how to avoid risks, whether on the internet or during journeys to and from school. They take every opportunity to take exercise, understanding that this, together with a balanced diet, is vital to their healthy development. Attendance has improved in the last year and is now average.

The school council provides a useful forum for pupils' voices and pupils contribute well to the school and wider community in other ways, for example acting as mentors to their fellow pupils or raising money for worthwhile causes such as the Haiti earthquake appeal. The sound strides pupils make in developing key skills in word, number and computing and their good collaborative abilities ensure satisfactory development of skills that ensure their future economic well-being. Pupil's social and moral development are undoubted strengths and the school's excellent work on developing community cohesion has a highly beneficial influence on their understanding of other ethnic groups and cultures.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

The introduction of a 'creative curriculum' provides engaging topics for study. Good self-evaluation of the impact of this has led to modifications. For example, science is now taught separately again, after concerns that not all aspects were fully covered. Links with other providers has generated a local community project where pupils have planned and are putting on a festival. The rich community cohesion programme enhances the curriculum further. For example, Year 4 pupils enthusiastically drafted a leaflet on Ghana (where the school has a partner school). This promoted their literacy, geography and information and communication technology skills. Educational visits and numerous visitors to the school also enrich the curriculum. The local sports network improves sporting opportunities. The small number of after-school clubs is popular and each is well attended.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some good elements. Behaviour management is consistently effective so there is minimal disruption. Teaching assistants offer strong help to individuals and groups of pupils. In some lessons, pupils' learning is moved on quickly with lively changes of activity and style. Teachers use interactive whiteboards creatively to maintain interest and pace. However, this is inconsistent, as some lessons can be slow, with an overlong introduction and the work is not always well matched to pupils' needs. In particular, challenge for higher attaining pupils is sometimes missing.

Teachers mark pupils' books most carefully, indicating if learning objectives have been met. They proffer good advice, but do not link this to pupils' targets. The tracking of pupils' progress is very thorough but this information is not used to set precise individual

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targets.

There are well-organised systems to support the more vulnerable. Pupils who have speech, language and communication difficulties are identified early, planned for thoroughly and their progress is carefully monitored. Strong liaison with outside agencies provides valuable additional support. The learning mentor and counsellor both have a positive impact on pupils' well-being, for example in countering one pupil's unpunctuality.

The school's behaviour policy places the responsibility for good behaviour on pupils, encouraging them to make the correct choices. The outcomes of this on pupils' attitudes are impressive. The school has comprehensive arrangements to make the youngest children's transfer to the school calm and stress-free. Strong associations with local secondary schools smooth older pupils' transition to Year 7.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school reacted positively to the challenges posed by static or falling standards in recent years. Leaders and staff work cohesively to improve achievement and drive improvement. Robust assessment and tracking informs the setting of realistic but challenging attainment targets that pupils are well on the way to meeting.

The school monitors teaching and learning with increased regularity. The qualities of lessons are thoroughly recorded, but the school does not systematically re-visit classes to check if teachers have addressed areas for development. While teaching is slowly improving, particularly with the more constructive use of assessment, it remains inconsistent. Good use of assessment to identify and act on under-achievement and effective planning for pupils experiencing barriers to learning ensures no discrimination and good equality of opportunity for all.

Governors are enthusiastic, well trained and highly qualified. They are keen to offer support; for example, governors are regularly present at school assemblies. They have good systems to monitor the school and are keen to ask questions, but do not always challenge the school's plans and priorities. Governors take their safeguarding role seriously and review policies regularly, if not very analytically. The school has clear systems to ensure pupils' safeguarding. Lines of responsibility are clear to all staff, who ensure that the site is secure and has no undue hazards.

Initiatives such as the parent council promote a strong partnership with parents and

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carers. Parents are well informed and welcomed into the school. For example, a lower-school assembly attracted upwards of 80 parents and carers, happy to celebrate their children's successes. Regular meetings with staff, both formal and informal, afford parents good information on their child's progress.

The school actively seeks partnerships to enhance its teaching, curriculum and care. Links with other local schools and organisations provide many enriching experiences for pupils. Close liaison with agencies such as educational welfare have led to improvements, such as better attendance.

Robust auditing and consultation with all staff ensure a very dynamic contribution to community cohesion. Pupils' work with local specialists to produce their own curriculum guide has had a positive impact on their attitudes. Other local links, such as with Plymouth's Chinese community, are complemented with a developing partnership with a school in rural Scotland. The school's recent re-accreditation as an international school is partly based on close relationships it has sustained with a Ghanaian school. Pupils and staff in both schools share lesson activities and teaching resources.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Adults understand the needs of children and, as a result, children make satisfactory progress in all aspects of learning. They enter the Nursery Year with levels below those expected for their age and enter Key Stage 1 below the expected levels. Relationships are good and children's behaviour is managed very well. As a result, children are happy to make independent choices and are confident in selecting the resources they need for



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themselves.

Children enjoy school and persevere and concentrate well. A real strength is the organisation of sessions when children initiate their own learning. They choose from a wide range of activities, either indoors or out. All areas of learning are catered for, so, during these sessions they may be writing, counting, engaging in physical activities or being creative with interesting materials which they choose for themselves. Adults intervene sensitively and constantly look for ways to take learning forwards. Following the interests of the children has led to an exciting topic about dreams and the boys have been very involved in making 'Transformer' books. Writing is encouraged wherever possible and more emphasis is being placed on mark-making with even the youngest children.

Planned and informal assessments ensure adults know children well and they are recorded in the new individual 'learning journeys'. Staff are beginning to use their knowledge about what each child needs to do next. However, this is not yet clearly linked to future planning. The analysis of children's progress over both years of the Early Years Foundation Stage is not completely consistent, so that areas where progress is slower are sometimes not addressed early enough.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents are very supportive of the school and few expressed any concerns. Most respondents to the Ofsted questionnaire were happy with their child's experience and reported that their child enjoyed school. A very small minority expressed concerns over behaviour but the inspection could find no evidence to support this view.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stuart Road Primary 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 91 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	52	40	44	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	59	65	30	33	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	40	47	52	7	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	45	36	40	7	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	42	43	47	6	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	37	48	53	7	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	46	47	52	1	1	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)	31	34	46	51	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	34	48	53	6	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	30	49	54	9	10	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	36	52	57	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	45	49	39	43	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	49	41	45	3	3	1	1

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



15 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stuart Road Primary School, Plymouth, PL1 5LL

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors and helping us when we visited your school recently. The school gives you a satisfactory education and, as you correctly told us, there are lots of good things about it. One thing we would like to congratulate you on is your good behaviour; you develop well and one reason for this is that you are well cared for.

Teaching is satisfactory and there are a lot of good lessons, but some are a bit slow and not so challenging. Teaching is improving and this has helped you to make better progress and your achievement is satisfactory. The mix of subjects that you do ' the curriculum ' is good and enlivened by links with other schools, both near and far.

After a dip in standards in 2009, the school is now working hard to improve and we think the headteacher and staff are moving things in the right direction. To help with this improvement, we have asked them to concentrate on:

- improving lessons so they all run at a good pace and are all challenging
- giving you your own clear targets for improvement; if you do not think your targets are clear enough, you should ask your teacher
- checking up on teaching more thoroughly.

Once again, many thanks for all your help. It was great meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead inspector

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