

Stretton Sugwas CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116849
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	338906
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shirley Williams
Headteacher	Stephen Matthews
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed seven lessons and five teachers were seen teaching. They observed the school's work and looked at school policies, monitoring files, records of pupils' progress and 57 parental questionnaires. Discussions were held with governors, individual parents and carers, groups of pupils and staff.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics relative to English
- the relative progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
- the impact of recent curriculum initiatives on the quality of pupils' learning and personal development.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average school in a rural setting. Its intake is drawn from families with a range of socio-economic backgrounds. Up to a third of pupils in any given year group are from service families based locally that may move in or out of the area at short notice. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is high. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language. The school holds a number of awards for its work, including the ArtsMark (Gold), ActiveMark (Gold) and a local authority Quality Mark for special educational needs and/or disabilities provision.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school, with a good capacity for sustained improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and remaining areas for improvement. The school has therefore been able to consolidate and improve on previously good practice. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and enjoys a high level of support from staff, governors and parents and carers. As one parent commented, 'The school is better than ever and is positively thriving because of the changes brought about by the new headteacher.'

Areas of excellence that have been established include:

- outstanding outcomes for pupils in their personal development, including behaviour and attendance
- exemplary practice in care, guidance and support, especially in providing for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities
- very purposeful partnerships with parents and carers and outside agencies and groups to enliven the curriculum and enrich the pupils' learning.

Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6 but is improving. The trend in the past was for attainment to be significantly higher in English than in mathematics and the only key issue at the last inspection was to improve achievement in mathematics. This issue has now been addressed. Currently, pupils are on course to reach above-average standards by the end of Key Stage 2 in both subjects. More-able pupils had been underachieving in writing in Key Stage 1 but with improved provision have caught up.

Pupils' outstanding behaviour contributes well to their learning. They have excellent collaborative skills and therefore make good use of any opportunities they have to work independently. This avenue for learning is not yet fully exploited in lessons, however. Teaching is good, but not yet consistently so across both key stages. Teachers' plans take account of the prior attainment of pupils, but do not make consistent enough use of opportunities to assess and challenge the pupils as they work. The curriculum is good, with excellent enrichment opportunities, including regular input by specialist teachers in music, but the development of music skills within lessons is less well established. Recent initiatives include the increased use of information and communication technology (ICT) by pupils to aid their research and presentation of work and the school is at the forefront locally in developing a virtual learning environment. A structured approach to mathematical investigations has also been introduced, but routine independent use and development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills by pupils in other subjects is not yet fully embedded in the curriculum.

The school takes exceptionally good care of its pupils, keeping them safe and

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successfully encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. Governors fulfil their duties well and actively challenge the headteacher to continue improving provision and raising standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of high-quality learning by pupils in order to maintain attainment above the national average by:
 - ensuring that teaching is of a consistently high quality throughout the school
 - providing a greater range of independent learning opportunities within lessons
 - further extending opportunities for pupils to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in a range of subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and they achieve well. All groups of pupils, including those with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress relative to their starting points. Children from service families settle quickly and make similar progress to their peers. Attainment over time is average overall at the end of Year 6 and high in writing. However, current attainment is above average in English and mathematics and pupils are making equally good progress in both subjects. Learning and progress are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and improving, with evidence of accelerating progress in writing for the more able pupils, which had been slow. The progress made by pupils in lessons seen during the inspection was also good, but was not outstanding because pupils did not have enough opportunity to extend themselves through independent learning.

The pupils are highly regarded in the area and play an increasingly active role in improving their school and local environment. Their excellent contribution to the community includes lobbying the council to improve local footpaths and cycle routes. Pupils are very aware of what is needed to lead healthy lives and the vast majority regularly participate in sports and other forms of exercise. Their awareness and appreciation of the wider society is improving rapidly due to the impact of links with more ethnically and culturally diverse schools. Parents and carers appreciate the way pupils relate positively to individuals with disabilities and special educational needs and how well prepared their children are for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	1
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?

Teachers use assessment well to plan activities based on pupils' existing knowledge and skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have good individual support to reach their challenging targets. Children from service families are given excellent support and guidance to settle in quickly and their progress is closely monitored to ensure that they do not fall behind. The most effective teaching in the school probes pupils' understanding and skills as they work and challenges them to improve further. An outstanding example of this was seen in a drama lesson in Key Stage 2 in which the teacher encouraged pupils to develop their ideas collaboratively, evaluate their own performance and then improve further. In some lessons the pace of learning slows because expectations of more-able pupils to learn independently are not high enough. The school recognises that more needs to be done in this area and has begun working towards the Challenge Award for provision for gifted and talented pupils. This has led for example to the inclusion of mathematical investigations in teachers' planning. Pupils enjoy this way of working, but don't get the most out of it because they are not yet sufficiently challenged to provide explanations for their observations and explore further avenues of enquiry.

Previous inconsistency in the quality of teaching between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is reducing because teachers are increasingly evaluating the quality of their own teaching according to how well the pupils are doing. Good teaching by highly trained teaching assistants was seen during the inspection in personal, social and health education and English lessons.

The good curriculum and excellent enrichment activities contribute greatly to pupils'

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enjoyment of school and to their achievement. The pupils all benefit from the regular input of specialist teachers, for example in music, art and sport. Opportunities within other lessons for pupils to develop their skills and creativity in these subjects, through composition in music and design in art for example, are more limited.

High-quality care, guidance and support are given to all individuals. High attendance has been achieved partly by helping service families to keep their children in school while their parents are on leave from stressful postings overseas. Excellent arrangements are made for pupils to prepare fully for the secondary school of their choice. Parents and carers comment very favourably on these aspects of the school's provision.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's good capacity to continue improving arises from the wide range of improvements secured over the past three years and current, good progress that is rooted in a strongly shared sense of purpose and firm, dynamic leadership by the headteacher. Staff and governors work very effectively as a team. Wise decisions have been taken in the deployment and training of staff to meet specific needs. For example, training of teaching assistants has given them the skills to teach groups independently in order to deliver separate agendas to different year-groups in mixed-age classes. Good progress was observed in some of these sessions during the inspection. Subject leaders have also benefited from professional development inputs that have brought improvements to provision, for example the introduction of mathematical investigations.

The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to achieve well. For example, the rigorous monitoring and evaluation introduced by the headteacher has begun the process of eliminating inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in different key stages, as reflected in the improving grades for teaching in previously weak areas. The excellent work the school does to integrate incoming pupils from service families quickly ensures that they also have equal opportunities to succeed.

Provision for promoting community cohesion is good. The school works well to promote social harmony by fostering positive attitudes to all groups in society, for example through its links with culturally diverse schools in the West Midlands and South Africa. Good safeguarding procedures have an evident impact as pupils say they feel very safe and this is confirmed by parents and carers. All relevant policies are in place and with a programme of regular reviews.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join Reception from a number of different nurseries. The range of their attainment on entry is wide and slightly below average in most years. The children make good progress in all the areas of learning so that by the end of Reception most of them have achieved the early learning goals for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Transition into Key Stage 1 is managed well to accommodate children at different ages and stages of development. More-able children are supported well to prepare for Year 1 work early, while those children who are not ready have continuing opportunities to learn through play in the early stages of Year 1. The headteacher is leading further improvements to this process by arranging for building extensions and renovations to allow even more flexibility in movement between Reception and Key Stage 1.

The children have a good range of resources to choose from for their indoor and outdoor learning. Staff interact with them effectively as they play so as to assess their progress. This information is used well to plan further activities. On occasions some children lack concentration and purpose in their play and this is not picked up because all available staff are engaged in assessment activities. Indoor and outdoor play is carefully planned and both areas were in use during the inspection, but the children's access to the outside area is restricted to some extent during the renovation work.

Teacher-led and child-initiated activities dovetail well around a theme. During the inspection, the children were excited by the visit of an 'alien' that had left presents for them in the cupboard. This imaginative story presented by the staff generated lively and successful learning in many areas, including communication, language and literacy,

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creative and mathematical development, as the pupils discussed and explored the possible size and various facets of the alien's imagined life. The staff work together very closely and successfully to provide a varied and interesting curriculum for the children and to ensure that all health and safety procedures are adhered to. The children's high level of awareness of how to keep safe was illustrated by a child saying 'we don't know who you are' when asked a question by an inspector.

The provision is managed well through good teamwork within the setting and useful guidance and support from the headteacher. Parents' and carers' comments reflect a high level of satisfaction with the provision for their children on starting the school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The questionnaire response rate was unusually high and parents and carers have overwhelmingly positive views of the school. All the respondents said that their children are happy at the school and are kept safe. A few parents and carers said their children were not making enough progress and that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with properly. The inspection found that pupils' progress is good overall, but that it is better in some year groups than others. The pupils spoken to about unacceptable behaviour said that it happened rarely and that staff dealt with it quickly and effectively. No evidence was seen to suggest otherwise and behaviour was judged outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stretton Sugwas CofE 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 105 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	53	27	47	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	68	18	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	39	33	58	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	39	31	54	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	44	30	53	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	47	26	46	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	49	28	49	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)	24	42	30	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	46	28	49	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	51	24	42	2	4	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	46	28	49	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	32	56	24	42	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	61	22	39	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils 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.



Friday 30 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stretton Sugwas CofE Primary School, Hereford, HR4 7AE

My colleague and I enjoyed our visit to your school very much. We found it to be a good school. Your teachers work hard to deliver good lessons and prepare you very well for your secondary education. Here are the best things we found about your school:

- you behave exceptionally well, come to school as often as you can and thoroughly enjoy it, really know how to keep safe and healthy and look after each other very well indeed
- the staff look after you exceptionally well and make sure you do as well as you can, especially those of you with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- your headteacher is an excellent leader and all the staff and governors help him to make sure that the school is managed well.

We found that most of your lessons are good, but that pupils learn better in some classes than in others, so we have asked the headteacher to make sure that your lessons are equally good no matter what year you are in. We have also asked your teachers to plan more activities that let you use all your skills doing independent projects on your own or with friends and to give you more opportunities to develop your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in different subjects.

I hope that you enjoy your secondary schools as much as we saw you enjoying Stretton Sugwas School and that you do well in your lives after school.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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