

Stalmine Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119147
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339365
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Ann Wallis

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ann Ralph
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Hallett
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons and two assemblies, held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and the School Improvement Partner and spoke with staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress data and other documentation. They also analysed 39 parental questionnaires, 11 staff questionnaires and 35 pupils' questionnaires.

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

- the rate of progress of all groups of pupils
- the quality of the care, guidance and support the school provides
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in bringing about school improvement
- the quality of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This very small rural school serves the village of Stalmine and neighbouring communities. Below average numbers of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups or who are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils that are eligible for free school meals is well below average. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in one mixed age Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class. The school has gained the Healthy Schools 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Stalmine Primary is a good school where pupils feel safe and their individual talents are valued and nurtured. This is a very inclusive school which is at the heart of the community it serves. It has many strengths, including the outstanding way in which pupils are given responsibility and contribute to their own and the wider community and the close links it has forged with parents and carers. The care, guidance and support the school gives its pupils are outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and really appreciative of the excellent care it gives their children. Good leadership and management have steered the school seamlessly through a recent period of disruption to leadership at a senior level and the school is moving forward successfully. Leaders have a very good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because they evaluate its work rigorously and have identified appropriate priorities for development, such as refining and developing systems to track pupils' progress. Good progress has been made in addressing issues for improvement from the previous inspection. For example, improved marking of work and clearer targets help pupils make good progress. Hence, the school has good capacity to improve further. Children enter the Reception class with skills which are at expected levels for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although the opportunities they have for outdoor learning are currently underdeveloped. In this very small school, test results fluctuate from year-to-year depending on the ability of the cohort. However, over recent years pupils have reached at least average and usually above average standards at the end of Year 6. School tracking data shows that all pupils make good progress from their starting points. This view was confirmed by work seen in lessons and in pupils' books during the inspection. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good overall. In most lessons, varied tasks and knowledgeable teaching engage pupils' interest so they are keen to learn and make good progress. In a minority of lessons where teaching is satisfactory, the pace of learning is slower. In some of these lessons, the higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to achieve their very best.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate pupil's progress by:
 - increasing the level of challenge in lessons particularly for higher attaining pupils
 - refining and developing systems to track pupils' progress and identify early

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those who need extra help

- further using specialist staff expertise to raise attainment in literacy and mathematics.
- Improve the provision for outdoor learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

During the inspection, all pupils were seen making good progress in lessons and achieving well. Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to succeed, consequently, they work hard and concentrate well. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and good learning takes place in an atmosphere of respect and trust. Good use of praise and reward builds pupils' confidence so they become effective independent learners. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and made the same good progress as their peers.

Results in national tests fluctuate because of the differing abilities of the very small numbers of pupils in each year group. However, pupils reached just above average standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science for three of the last four years. This represents good progress from their average starting points when they enter Reception.

Pupils attend school regularly and behave well. They are very kind and considerate towards each other and to staff and visitors. They clearly know the difference between right and wrong and feel safe in the knowledge that if they have any problems or worries adults in school will listen and sort things out. They have a good understanding of other cultures which is enhanced by visits and visitors to the school. They are keen to take responsibility as mentors, buddies and members of the school council. They know that they are listened to and appreciate that their suggestions for improvements, such as the footpath and new play areas are valued and acted upon. Pupils talk knowledgeably how to stay healthy, they take regular exercise and really enjoy sport. Pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are developed well and these, combined with good teamwork skills and growing confidence, mean pupils are well prepared for their futures.

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	2
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good. In most lessons, teachers explain tasks clearly and in an interesting way so that pupils want to learn. The recent arrangement whereby one teacher specialises in teaching literacy and another teaches numeracy to the older pupils is working well and helping to accelerate pupils' progress even further. The school has acted decisively on addressing the areas for improvement suggested at the last inspection. Hence, the marking of pupils' work is more rigorous and pupils are now clear about what their targets are and how to reach them.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities extends the curriculum and really adds to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Whole-school events, such as the Christmas production, which was in full swing during the inspection, involve all children and make the most of the talents of, for example, the large school choir.

Outstanding care, guidance and support are a strength of the school. The school works extremely well with a range of outside agencies, the community, other schools and parents to ensure that all pupils are very well supported and get the specialist personal help they need. Very good links with local Nurseries, child minders and other schools ensure transitions between schools and between the stages of each pupil's education are seamless.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	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?

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and has identified appropriate priorities for improvement, which are understood and shared by all staff and governors. Good use is made of the specialist expertise of staff, for example, in literacy, numeracy, languages and music to raise attainment and enhance the curriculum. Consequently, staff feel valued, teamwork is excellent and morale is high. Governors are very knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, evaluate its work well and are increasingly involved in determining its strategic direction. Finances are well managed and the school provides good value for money. The school values all of its pupils very well and ensures that they all make at least good progress. Safeguarding procedures are all firmly in place. The school has forged excellent relationships with parents who are overwhelmingly appreciative of the education it provides. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's achievement and most are highly involved in their learning. The school promotes community cohesion very well. It is at the heart of the local community and is proud, for example, to host the village festival. It also has established links with communities further afield so that pupils are knowledgeable about communities and cultures which differ from their own.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	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	2
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

<p>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</p>	
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress during their Reception Year. They enter school with skills which are usually in line with those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1 most are working at the expected levels and many children exceed these. Children follow the good examples of those in their class in Years 1 and 2 and settle well into school routines. Most quickly learn to cooperate well with each other and with adults. They work well independently and can sustain concentration on one activity. They say they feel safe and know, for example, that eating fruit and drinking water will help to keep them healthy. Teaching is good. Lessons are lively, interesting and well planned. There are good opportunities for creative play, particularly in the 'Duckling Room' where children really enjoy learning. All staff engage children in conversation when they are working independently and this helps develop children's good speaking and listening skills. However, the provision for outdoor learning is underdeveloped and the school recognises this as a priority for improvement. Work is well matched to the needs of children so they make good progress. Leadership and management are good. Shared planning ensures that work is well organised and carefully coordinated by the headteacher, class teacher and teaching assistants who all play a part in ensuring children make good progress. Parents are very appreciative of the way they are warmly welcomed into school and kept informed of their children's progress. Good links with local Nurseries and child minders also ensure a smooth transition for children into the Reception class.

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

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of and fulsome in their praise for the school. They are very appreciative of the close links the school has with them and the way they are kept informed about their children's progress. All comment positively on the care and support their children receive and the progress they are making. Inspectors agreed with parents' comments about the outstanding care pupils received and the good progress they made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stalmine 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 inspector received 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 55 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	62	15	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	74	9	23	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	77	8	21	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	64	14	36	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	67	12	31	0	0	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	67	12	31	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	67	13	33	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)	20	51	19	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	67	11	28	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	59	15	38	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	56	14	36	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	62	15	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	62	15	38	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 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.



14 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stalmine Primary School, Poulton-le-Fylde, FY6 0LR

Thank you so much for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. A particular thank you to those of you who took the time to talk with us and tell us all about the things you liked at your school.

These are some of the main findings in our report.

- Yours is a good school where you reach above average standards, make good progress and achieve well.
- Your school gives you outstanding care, guidance and support.
- You are well taught, lessons are interesting and you follow a good curriculum.
- You behave well, really enjoy taking responsibility and care about other people.
- Your school is well led and managed.

This is what we have asked your school to do now:

- help you to make even faster progress by tracking your progress carefully, making sure the work is at exactly the right level for you, making all lessons even better and continuing to make sure you get expert teaching in literacy and mathematics.
- improve the opportunities for the younger children to learn outdoors.

You can help your school to improve even further by continuing to attend regularly and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Ann Wallis

Lead inspector

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