

Stillington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121324
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	339918
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Lesley Clark

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	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Chapman
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Atkinson
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons, two teachers and spent 80% of inspection time looking at learning across the school. The inspector held meetings with the Chair of Governors, staff and all pupils in Years 5 and 6, including school council members. She observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including paperwork and policies relating to safeguarding; pupils' work in English and mathematics; younger children's learning journals (detailed records of children's progress and development); the school improvement plan; and 24 completed questionnaires from parents and carers as well as completed questionnaires from pupils and staff.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at the following:

- how well pupils make progress in writing and mathematics
- the opportunities pupils have to assess their own learning and use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
- how well the school plans for community cohesion and the impact on pupils' understanding of different cultures both in Great Britain and worldwide
- whether the Early Years Foundation Stage is the strength that the school believes it to be.

Information about the school

This very small primary school serves the rural village of Stillington and other nearby villages. All pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, overall, but varies significantly between year groups. In Key Stage 2 in particular it is often much higher than average. Currently no pupils hold a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little above average. Numbers of pupils are steadily increasing. Over 60% of pupils joined the school in Key Stage 2. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage share a separate building and outdoor provision with Key Stage 1 pupils and with a playgroup on Wednesdays. The playgroup was not part of this inspection. There have been several staffing changes in the last two years, including a period of acting headship by a senior teacher. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark, a Leading Aspect award and 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

This is a good school. It takes exceptionally good care of its pupils. Safeguarding practices are first rate. Pupils are highly considerate and very supportive of each other both in lessons and in the playground. They have an outstanding awareness of issues relating to their own and each other's safety. Their behaviour is outstanding. Attendance is above average because pupils thoroughly enjoy school. Pupils are known as individuals. They grow in confidence because adults listen to them and take their views into account. This is why the school is so successful at integrating pupils when they join the school at times other than the usual.

Pupils achieve well from their varying starting points. Attainment at the end of Year 6 varies in English, mathematics and science because of the very small cohorts but is broadly average over time. Attainment in mathematics is generally lower than in English. Most pupils make good progress but the lower or average attaining pupils in Key Stage 2 make slower progress in mathematics because they have gaps in their knowledge and do not use mental calculations efficiently. Pupils use their literacy skills more extensively than their numeracy skills in other subjects. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from generally well below average starting points. The outdoor provision for problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is not as good as the indoor provision. Pupils across the school are well taught. They are good at assessing their own learning. This aids their good progress. Pupils are curious about the world around them and readily embrace new experiences. While there are considerable strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, their understanding of social and cultural diversity in Great Britain is more limited.

The school has continued to provide a good education for pupils since the last inspection, despite staffing changes and interim management arrangements. There have been significant improvements in behaviour, assessment and the curriculum since then. Self-evaluation is effective. The school is aware of its strengths and areas for development and plans carefully to address these. Governors are fully involved in this process and give good support and challenge. This illustrates the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics, especially for lower or average attainers, by:
 - targeting precisely where pupils have gaps in their knowledge
 - giving pupils more focused practice at mental and oral mathematics so as to

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improve the speed and accuracy of their calculations

- giving pupils more opportunities to use their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Extend the outdoor provision for problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Extend pupils' understanding of the different social and cultural communities in Great Britain.

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

Results in national tests vary considerably from year to year because year groups are very small and a high proportion of pupils join part-way through Key Stage 2. Current standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average whereas last year they were below average. Newcomers make good progress from their various starting points. The more able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because the work both challenges and interests them. Standards in reading and science are generally higher than those in writing and mathematics. Pupils' current work indicates standards in writing are improving and are above average. Pupils write accurately, use a wide vocabulary, read their own work critically and make well-judged improvements. In lessons pupils apply themselves well and their keenness to improve their work was evident. For example, Year 6 pupils changed 'noise' to 'cacophony' and 'dragon' to 'leviathan' to improve their work. Pupils are less confident in mathematics lessons and do not always use mental and oral strategies efficiently to help them reach a solution quickly. Lower or average attainers are hesitant about place value, especially in decimals and negative numbers. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. They enjoy the daily challenges which they tackle independently. They read their work to each other and match what they have done against success criteria. They understand well how to improve their work.

Pupils are keen to take action to improve their health. They work and play energetically. They hold clear views about their learning, explaining they like investigations because they enjoy practical work. Pupils bubbled with excitement as they explained what fun it was to work out which materials mediaeval knights might use to cover castle stairs bearing in mind their leather shoes might slip! Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They run the school council and proudly point out the differences they have made to the school. For example, their views were acted upon to improve the toilet facilities. There is no bullying or racism because of the school's 'zero tolerance' of name calling of any kind. Pupils develop the wider skills they need to equip them for the next phase of their education in that they are socially responsible and quietly confident. They point out, 'We would like to meet children from an inner city school.' Currently, they have limited experience of engaging with people from different minority ethnic and religious backgrounds representative of Great Britain.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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?

A major strength is the extent to which teachers take pupils' individual needs into account in lessons. Questioning is good and mostly targets pupils at the right level for their ability. Teachers use pupils' assessments of their own learning effectively to adjust groups each day. This means that they can give more help to those pupils who feel they need it and do not hold back those who think they are ready to move on. Teachers deploy teaching assistants well and the more able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities especially benefit from their support. The pace of learning slows in mental and oral mathematics lessons because teachers do not always make time throughout the day for pupils to practise new skills. Marking is good, especially in literacy, and clearly shows pupils how to improve their work.

Pupils' views are taken fully into account in the newly designed curriculum. Their suggestions for debates, archery and displays are all evident in this term's work. This has had a major impact on pupils' enjoyment and wider skills. Provision for mathematics is less strong, with fewer challenges which pupils set and solve, unlike in science, for example, where pupils calculated the scientific forces at work in sections of the Bayeux tapestry. Key Stage 1 pupils benefit from an extended Early Years Foundation Stage curricular approach based on child-led learning with specific teaching points and challenges. Provision for modern foreign languages is good, underpinned by close links with the secondary school to extend pupils' awareness of European languages.

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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Extra-curricular provision is intermittent and so pupils miss out on regular commitments to lunchtime or after-school clubs. Well thought out educational visits contribute well to pupils' learning.

Consistently good support and guidance, coupled with excellent care, enables new starters and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to begin to overcome barriers to their learning. Individual education and/or behavioural plans are used effectively to promote learning. The school works well with families and with external agencies to give all pupils the support they need. The good-quality advice and guidance prepares pupils well for the next phase in their education.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers keep a close check on the work of the school and track pupils' progress carefully. They have an accurate view of pupils' achievements and check the impact of new measures thoroughly. They take appropriate action to tackle weaknesses and promote equality of opportunity, inviting in a numeracy consultant, for example, to sharpen planning in mathematics to ensure that all pupils achieve equally well. It is too soon to see the full impact of this support. Target setting is challenging and realistic but the high mobility of pupils means that sometimes targets are not met and occasionally they are exceeded. The new curriculum has inspired staff and pupils alike and there is a real buzz about the school. The school's safeguarding procedures fully meet current government requirements. The measures to ensure child protection and safety are very secure. Procedures are constantly updated to maintain excellent practice. Parents', carers' and pupils' views are taken regularly into account and so they have complete confidence in the school. Partnerships with parents and carers, and external providers, are good and successfully broaden pupils' educational experience. The home–school contact books provide a very effective link because each week parents and carers see and comment on their children's learning. The school's commitment to community cohesion is satisfactory. It has extensive local links but its international and national links are underdeveloped. This results in pupils' limited understanding of different cultures and communities nationally, especially the ethnic diversity of Great Britain. The school is a harmonious community in which respect for individual rights and responsibilities is paramount and any form of discrimination is not tolerated.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good gains in their learning during the course of the Reception Year. They settle down quickly and become increasingly independent and self-reliant. Best of all the children love to learn outside, saying to each other, 'I'm going to stay outside for ever and ever!' Staff provide a good range of activities to challenge and interest the children both inside and outdoors with lots of opportunities for role play. Activities which require children to solve problems, reason and use numeracy skills tend to take place indoors and are often adult-led. This means that children miss out on using these skills in lots of different ways when they are outside. When children lead their own learning their learning comes on apace. Occasionally, when they sit for just a bit too long their attention wavers. At the same time, children do benefit from working alongside older pupils. In particular, this motivates them to learn to read and write because they want to be as good as the others. The setting is well led and managed. Children make good progress, especially in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development, both of which are well below average generally on entry. Staff assess children's learning well and use their detailed observations of what children say and do to help them plan the next steps in their learning. By the end of the Reception Year, children work and play together productively and with a great deal of enjoyment, though standards are generally below those expected at the start of Year 1.

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

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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

Virtually all parents and carers express wholly positive views about the school. They especially appreciate the way their children are treated as individuals and comment on the 'caring and approachable staff'. The inspector agrees with their views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stillington 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 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 40 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	71	7	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	71	7	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	63	8	33	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	71	7	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	71	7	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	71	7	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	83	4	17	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)	15	63	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	67	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	63	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	54	10	42	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	83	4	17	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	83	4	17	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.



12 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stillington Primary School, York, YO61 1LA

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome when I came to inspect your school. A special 'thank you' goes to pupils in Years 5 and 6 who spent time showing their work to me and talking to me about this school and how different it is from their experience of other schools. You go to a good school. All the adults in school take excellent care of you and they take notice of your views. Your behaviour is extremely good. You have an excellent understanding of safety, and work and play very happily together. You are well taught and the new curriculum you helped to design is really good. I loved the entrance to the Key Stage 2 classroom; it looked just like a castle!

You write well and are good at checking your own work and making it better. Some of you find mathematics a bit more of a struggle. This is what I have asked your school to do next to help you all do even better.

- Help you to fill the gaps in your mathematical knowledge and give you more practice at mental and oral mathematics so you get better and quicker at calculating. I also want you to have more times to use your numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Provide problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy activities outdoors for Reception children.
- Extend your understanding of the different social and cultural communities in Great Britain because several of you said you would like to meet children from inner city schools and have pen pals and this would broaden your outlook.

I hope you enjoy these new challenges. Perhaps you will set each other some mathematical challenges too!

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lesley Clark

Lead Inspector

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