



Studley Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125527
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293289
Inspection dates 1–2 November 2006
Reporting inspector John Lilly

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	High Street
School category	Community		Studley
Age range of pupils	3–7		B80 7HJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01527 852491
Number on roll (school)	259	Fax number	01527 852607
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Gordon Marshall
		Headteacher	Debbie Price
Date of previous school inspection	29 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and serves a community within which some families are socially and economically disadvantaged. The proportion of children identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above average. There have been radical improvements to the accommodation over recent years and these works were not fully complete at the time of the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Studley is a good school that is determined to become outstanding. Parents and children were keen to tell inspectors that both children and their parents 'love their school', and feel it is a place in which children greatly enjoy their learning. Inspectors agree. Leadership and management are good, being both creative and innovative. The headteacher provides an inspiring vision of what an outstanding school would look like, and governors, senior managers, teachers, and teaching assistants work as an expert, close-knit and very determined team to achieve this vision. A key factor in the school's improvement is the way the school seeks advice and effectively uses partnership with others, for example specialist agencies. Provision at the Foundation Stage is very good, with outstanding accommodation. The good curriculum at the Foundation Stage and for Years 1 and 2 fully engages the children's interest. The transition from the Reception curriculum to that in Year 1, however, is insufficiently smooth and this, for a time, slows the children's progress. Across the school teaching and learning are consistently good and consequently, children make good progress. Even so, the challenge in the work does not always match precisely with what individual children need. Also, children do not always get enough clear guidance on exactly how well they could achieve and what they need to do to improve their work. Children join the Nursery with low attainment and achieve well. Standards by the end of the Reception year are satisfactory. Achievement throughout the school is equally good. By the end of Year 2 standards of attainment match the national average. The school has very strong values that the children make their own. Personal development is good, as are the children's behaviour, relationships and attitudes to their work. The children learn how to be safe and healthy, and vigorously apply what they learn to their own lives. They make a good contribution to the life and work of the school, and they are well prepared for the next step in their education. Support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities is outstanding and provision for those who are talented and gifted is very good. Good standards of care, guidance and support ensure that children are safe, feel cared for and receive the advice they need to develop as confident learners and ambitious young people. Two parents, reflecting the views of many, wrote, 'It's a fantastic school', and 'The school provides an ideal environment in which successful learning can take place'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure learning always matches precisely the needs of each child, telling each child exactly the level they need to achieve and how.
- Improve the transition from the curriculum in Reception to the more structured learning in Year 1.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards of attainment satisfactory. The children join the Nursery with a very wide range of attainment. While some children have weak speaking and listening skills others are almost ready to learn to read and write. The majority, however, have low levels of speaking and listening, a restricted experience of the wider world and have limited social and personal skills, especially the boys. Children settle quickly, gain the routines they need and become eager learners. By the end of the Reception year children meet most of the nationally expected early learning goals, although a significant number still have some way to go with their speaking and listening and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The latter, in particular, holds them back when moving on to Year 1. This good progress continues throughout the school. Standards had remained static for many years but there is now a clear upward trend. The reasons are much better provision in the Nursery and Reception classes and better use of assessment to focus the teaching. By the end of Year 2 attainment matches the national average. A few more able children do not achieve as well as they might in writing. This is because their oral language has not developed sufficiently well and so they find it difficult to write what they cannot first say 'in their heads'.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Children relish all the school has to offer, enjoying in particular the way the playground equipment allows them to use their imagination. Strong and very clear expectations mean they learn how to relate well with others and to avoid confrontations. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Children are proud of the very active part they play in helping make the school an exciting and beautiful place. A strength is the way all children are keen to play their part and know how to do so. They behave well because they want to and not just because they are told. They become confident young people, caring and perceptive of the needs of others. Their enjoyment of school is the foundation of their good achievement and they gain a good range of skills to help them succeed in the future. The school has rightly recognised the need to develop further the children's sense of responsibility and independence by, amongst other ideas, forming a school council. The children's ability to manage their own learning is better than at the time of the last inspection but there is scope for further improvement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are planned with imagination and deep understanding of how young children learn. They have clear objectives for the class as a whole, are challenging and paced, and behaviour is well managed. Realising that many children have low levels of speaking and listening when they start school, teachers use talking very well to encourage children to explain their ideas. This helps develop children's thinking. Consequently, they are keen and eager to learn, often showing their excitement at learning new things. They collaborate well and take care in their work. Many parents feel as one parent said, 'The teachers encourage creativity and make learning fun'. To become outstanding, the school rightly recognises that teachers need to match the challenge in work even more closely to the ability and needs of each child, and show each child even more exactly where they need to reach and precisely how to get there.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

'My child receives an all-round education,' was a view of one parent and this reflected the views of many. Inspectors agree. Staff plan the curriculum well and are good at creating links between subjects. Good provision in lessons supports the pupils' good personal development. Outstanding support for children who find learning more difficult gives them full access to learning, and gifted children are pointed to clear opportunities that will allow their talents to flower. Staff constantly strive to improve the curriculum. For example they have rightly identified the need to improve the flow of the curriculum between Reception and Year 1 to smooth the progress in children's learning. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. The use of visiting specialists in areas such as art and music significantly enhances pupils' learning. The school is rightly broadening the learning further to overcome the narrow experience of the wider world that many children have when they join the school. For example, they are planning to make greater use of the experience of parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents comment on the very caring ethos of the school and feel that staff know their children very well and act immediately when individuals need help. They do this with 'total commitment.' Every child, whatever their nature or needs, is given the best chance to succeed because staff value every child highly. Children trust their teachers, and willingly ask for help, because they know that staff value their views and ideas. There are clear guidelines as to what good behaviour and learning are and children understand and use them. A specialist teaching assistant plays a very important role in forming a caring partnership between home and school. Several parents made

comments such as, 'There is encouragement in abundance and achievement is celebrated,' and 'Discipline is excellent'. Both views are true. Procedures for safeguarding children are secure and rigorous. The headteacher uses role models to support the children's development, for example the caretaker who ensures that the school is clean, safe and healthy. The teachers give children helpful advice on how to improve, for example through supportive marking. However, this advice is insufficiently focused on what each child could achieve rather than what the class as a whole are asked to achieve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's good leadership and management have some excellent features. The inspiring yet very realistic vision of the headteacher gives everyone a clear idea of how to move the school towards making its provision outstanding. With this clarity of vision, staff perform their leadership and management roles well, creating an orderly, purposeful and highly creative atmosphere in lessons and all activities. The headteacher makes very clear the standards of teaching she expects and helps staff achieve them. The school self-evaluates accurately, relentlessly seeking out areas for improvement. The school has rightly focused on improving staff skills with analysing and interpreting assessment data. The skills that staff are gaining is making a crucial contribution to the school's capacity to improve more rapidly.

There is a very strong partnership with parents and they are listened to carefully when seeking ways to improve the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. They value highly the 'It's not a problem,' response when they approach the school. Governors do a good job. As well as strongly supporting the headteacher and staff, their very careful management of finances and their innovative approach has paved the way for making significant improvement to the school's accommodation, a key area for improvement identified by the last inspection. Their approach ensures that full and effective use is made of the resources the school receives. This sense of team across leadership and management is a key strength of the school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making us so welcome to your lovely school. We enjoyed talking to you and being with you in your lessons.

We think you go to a good, or as you say 'lovely', school and you are very much a part of what makes it good. Your headteacher helps everyone to see what an outstanding school should be. The governors and your teachers are working very hard together to do everything possible to make Studley Infant School outstanding in the future. We think the school and your families work very closely together to help you. You are working very well in lessons, make good progress and learn many interesting things. This is because you have good teachers and you work hard. You get on with others and care for them. You behave well and are very polite. You are becoming thoughtful and mature young people. You told us you liked in particular the many things you have to play with in the playground and that grown-ups are always there to help you.

To become an even better school, we have said your teachers should:

- help each of you to do your best work by showing you more clearly what you could achieve
- make it easier for you to move from the things you learn in Reception to what you learn in Year 1.

I hope you do very well.