

Stoke Park Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115862
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312079
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Graham Stephens

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Guy Alexander
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Munday
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2003
School address	Abbotsbury Road Bishopstoke Eastleigh SO50 8NZ
Telephone number	02380 601773
Fax number	02380 696079

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than many infant schools. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and none are at an early stage of learning English. The school has a Speech Language Centre that supports seven pupils aged 4 to 7. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. There is a smaller percentage of girls than in most schools. The school gained an enhanced Healthy Schools Award in July 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stoke Park Infant School is a good and improving school. The vast majority of parents are supportive and hold it in high regard. As one said, 'We feel children get a really good all round standard of care and education.' Another said, 'I feel Stoke Park has progressed well over the past three years.'

Under the good leadership of the headteacher and well supported by the leadership and management teams and governing body, the school has a good capacity to improve. The effective senior leadership and management teams have formed a very accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have prioritised what action needs to be taken to raise standards further. They are well supported by governors who challenge the school to set appropriate, but ever more demanding, targets for improvement. From below average starting points, pupils achieve well and attain standards that are just above average by the time they leave the school. Teachers rigorously and meticulously track the progress of pupils and are able therefore to respond well to their varying needs. Provision for children with learning difficulties and for those who attend the Speech Language Centre is outstanding and this is reflected in the very good progress that pupils make. Excellent provision in the Nurture Unit also helps pupils overcome barriers to learning and enables them to play a full and active part in school life. Although boys significantly outnumber girls, staff ensure through careful planning, that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. Boys and girls make equally good progress. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups also achieve well.

The outstanding care, support and guidance is reflected in the comments of the majority of parents. 'The school is good. The children appear to be well rounded, polite, friendly and happy to be in an environment so conducive to learning' said one parent. Although the headteacher has not yet gained the confidence of a very small minority of parents, good links with the majority have been established and many parents have commented positively on the support they have received.

'We know the curriculum is good but we want to make it outstanding,' said the headteacher. The curriculum contributes well to the outstanding personal development by providing opportunities for pupils to work together, make choices and take on more responsibilities. The high priority given to health and safety ensures pupils understand what they need to do to be safe and also to lead a healthy life-style, 'You shouldn't eat chips but boiled potatoes are OK,' said one pupil in the dining hall.

Senior staff monitor teaching well to ensure it is good overall. However, there are still inconsistencies in the progress the pupils make. This is because of the variation in the quality of teaching from satisfactory to outstanding. In most classes, teaching is lively and moves learning along at a good pace. In other lessons the pace drops, learning opportunities are not fully exploited and the teaching, although satisfactory, does not provide consistent challenge. Pupils behave very well and are confident that all staff, who act as very good role models, will support them.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well and most attain average standards in all areas of learning except writing by the time they enter Year 1. Relationships are good and adults act as very good role models.

As a result, children quickly gain in confidence and do not hesitate to seek help and support when needed. The recently reviewed curriculum emphasises the need to provide a greater range of activities and experiences for the children at all times. This is good and provision is improving. Teachers and learning support assistants are beginning to monitor children's responses to the increased learning opportunities provided more rigorously. However, the impact of this improved provision is inconsistent because some opportunities to enhance learning through interacting with children are lost when adults focus too much on one activity.

What the school should do to improve further

- Remove inconsistencies in teaching to ensure that all learning progresses at a good pace and pupils make at least good progress in all lessons.
- Further enhance the impact of the revised curriculum in the Foundation Stage by ensuring that adults seize every opportunity to observe pupils and to intervene to support learning when appropriate.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter school with standards that are below average especially in communication and language skills. The majority achieve well in relation to their starting points and in recent years have attained broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. In 2006, standards dipped below average in writing when the cohort contained a very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. The 2007 teacher assessments indicate that pupils attained just above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they left Year 2. These standards are being maintained, especially in mathematics and writing. This is an improvement on recent years and is due to how well pupils' progress is now being tracked and evaluated and the impact of the school's focus on improving writing and the setting of challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and those in the Speech Language Centre receive excellent support from both teaching and non-teaching staff and achieve very well. Gifted and talented pupils are also supported very well and this is reflected in the percentage of higher levels attained. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve at a similar rate to their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent overall, reflecting the successful emphasis the school places on all aspects of pupils' development. Pupils are happy and enjoy school greatly. They feel valued, safe and sure of the support of all staff. They thrive in an atmosphere of encouragement and deserved praise, becoming confident and keen learners. 'Teachers make you feel proud when you do well,' commented one pupil. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they develop very good relationships with adults. Pupils' contributions to the school community are highly valued. The school council has suggested several improvements to their environment such as repainting the toilet walls. Pupils are developing a strong commitment to all aspects of healthy lifestyles. They have successfully responded to enterprise challenges, for example, by making and selling CDs of their singing. Such initiative and opportunities for responsibility prepare pupils well for their future lives. The school has worked hard with parents to improve attendance, which is average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their lessons and are motivated to learn because teachers plan interesting and sometimes exciting things for them to do. They ask questions that encourage pupils to reflect, explain and justify their thinking and this helps to ensure that they make good progress. The revised curriculum is increasing opportunities for pupils to work independently and to become more involved with their own learning. Displays reflect work in progress and many engage pupils in relevant activities. Learning targets are displayed prominently to attract pupils' attention. Teachers make very good use of assessment information to adjust their planning and ensure that individual needs are met. Although teaching is good overall it is not consistent. In a very small minority of lessons the pace is too slow and opportunities to observe pupils working and to intervene to aid learning are lost. The rate of progress in these lessons is satisfactory rather than good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The newly designed curriculum is already providing pupils with a relevant, stimulating approach to learning. The links between subjects are enriched by a very good variety of additional activities that add considerably to pupils' enjoyment and keenness to learn. As one parent commented of her child, 'The Barnaby Bear saga had him hooked!' Pupils now have good opportunities to practise and extend their writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum, although it is too soon to see the full effect of the improvements on standards and achievement. Careful planning and provision takes very good account of pupils' differing needs and abilities, including those of more able pupils and those with learning difficulties. It means that all pupils are fully included in lessons. Skilled learning support assistants make a very effective contribution to this. The high quality of the personal, health and social elements of the curriculum is recognised in the school's enhanced Healthy Schools' Award and the Activemark. This, together with increasing opportunities in lessons for pupils to work together or independently promotes life skills successfully that will enable pupils to become responsible members of their communities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. As a result, the school is a happy and safe community where pupils do well academically and make excellent progress in their personal development. All staff know the pupils and their individual needs very well. Pupils feel that any adult in school will listen to them and help if they have a problem. 'You can talk to anyone', and 'They will sort things out,' commented two children. This helps pupils to feel safe and secure.

The care and support given to vulnerable pupils and their families is greatly appreciated by parents. Excellent provision in the Nurture Group ensures that pupils with particular behavioural or emotional difficulties are helped very effectively to overcome barriers to their learning and to participate fully in the life of the school. Procedures to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of pupils are thorough. The rigorous academic assessment procedures are followed

meticulously. As a result, group and individual targets in English and mathematics help pupils to know exactly what to do to improve their work. Many are also being encouraged now to evaluate their work against their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The positive impact of leadership and management is reflected in the good progress made by pupils. The headteacher has drawn well on the strengths of the staff. She has established a management structure in which all staff are effectively involved in meeting the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The senior leadership team, very well supported by governors and staff, has a clear understanding of strengths to build on and weaknesses to be addressed. It is not complacent and has high expectations. Hence the current focus to further raise standards by revitalising the curriculum by exploring links between subjects to actively engage pupils in their learning. Both the special educational needs coordinator and the Speech and Language Centre manager provide outstanding leadership and consequently have a very positive effect on the very good progress that pupils make.

Governors support the school well. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, hold the school to account for the standards attained and have a very clear vision for the future.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	2

Personal development and well-being

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

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?	1

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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

23 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stoke Park Infant School, Eastleigh, SO50 8NZ

I would like to thank you for being so polite, friendly and helpful when inspectors came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and hearing about all the interesting things that you do.

We think that you go to a good school and this is why.

- Your headteacher runs the school well.
- You behave well, work hard and make good progress in most of your lessons.
- The school is providing more exciting and challenging things for you to do.
- The school looks after you all very carefully.
- You know what you have to do to stay fit and healthy.
- Colourful displays make your classrooms interesting places to work in.
- Your teachers are good at making your lessons interesting and helping you to improve.

Every school, even yours, has something that could be better. We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make sure that you get the right kind of work to help you improve in all of your lessons. We want all the youngest children to have even more exciting and interesting things to do very soon. I am sure that you will all continue to try hard so your school can be the fun place that you like and where you can all learn.

Finally, I would like to thank you once again for all your help. I wish you well in the future.

Graham Stephens

Lead inspector