

Stokes Wood Primary School and MLD Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120038
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	327182
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Arnalena (Nina) Bee

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	295
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	78
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brenda Leeson
Headteacher	Lesley Kibble
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Blackett Avenue Leicester LE3 9BX
Telephone number	01162 875305

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2008
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Fax number

01162 321032

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Stokes Wood has more pupils than most primary schools. The large majority come from White British backgrounds. There is additional provision for up to ten pupils who have general learning difficulties. However, only one pupil is currently on roll in this provision. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in a part-time Nursery class and two Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stokes Wood provides a good education for its pupils. Its key strength is the care it provides, as all adults know the needs of the pupils very well and provision to nurture and care for them is outstanding. One pupil, reflecting the views of many, said, 'We all like to help each other at this school.' Older pupils in Year 6 maturely and sensibly take on responsibilities such as befriending younger pupils at lunch and playtimes. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. An assembly about 'Practice Makes Perfect' typified the prominence given to pupils' good moral and social development. They listened well to one another and to adults, respecting the views, needs and aspirations of others. However, their awareness of the different religions and cultures in our society today is less secure.

Behaviour is good in lessons and when outside in the playground. Pupils are especially welcoming and polite to visitors. They enjoy their learning and appreciate the many extra-curricular activities that are offered in the well-planned curriculum. These activities particularly promote the need to take regular exercise. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of keeping healthy as they talk about the need to eat sensibly to avoid becoming obese. Their good personal and social skills, along with the good progress of the large majority of pupils, prepare them well for their next stage in their education.

Pupils achieve well. From standards that are below expected levels when they start in the Nursery, children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. This good progress continues and pupils generally reach average standards by the time they leave from Year 6. School data and inspection evidence show that achievement is not as rapid as pupils move through Years 3 to 6 as it is in other year groups. This is because although teaching is good overall, in a few classes it is sometimes only satisfactory. In these classes, teachers do not always make sure that activities are well matched to pupils' needs, and higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged.

The academic guidance that pupils receive is good. Pupils' progress is tracked very thoroughly in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing and those few who are not on course to reach their challenging targets are given additional support to get them back on track. In literacy, teachers assessments show pupils how to improve their work particularly well, but this is less so in other subjects, especially mathematics.

Leadership and management are good and the headteacher, staff and governors have a clear idea of strengths and areas for development. Actions taken have already improved standards and achievement at the end of Year 2. In addition, the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 has improved. This indicates that the school is well placed to improve further. Monitoring of the quality of teaching is not rigorous enough or sufficiently well documented. Systems in place have not been successful in moving enough of the satisfactory teaching to good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents are delighted at the way children are welcomed into school in the Nursery, and praised the transition procedures in place, such as home visits and open mornings. One parent wrote that her youngest child, who is in the Nursery class, cries at weekends because she misses it

so much. Behaviour is good and children show very positive attitudes to learning. They play and work in a safe and secure environment because arrangements to ensure their welfare and personal development are outstanding. Children develop good personal and social skills because adults know them well and, consequently, are able to cater for their individual needs very effectively. Teaching is good and resources are used well to reinforce and promote learning. Relationships between adults and children are very good and result in children quickly becoming confident individuals. Occasionally, teachers in Reception do not give children enough guidance to enable them to form their letters properly. This hinders their progress in developing basic writing skills. Achievement is good and children reach broadly average levels by the time they start in Year 1. A curriculum that is well planned for both inside and outdoors ensures that children experience a good balance of activities. Children were seen thoroughly enjoying themselves as they pretended to be working in the laundrette that is set up in one of the classrooms. Others listened and concentrated well, as they sounded out three-letter words, whilst supported well by the teacher. The EYFS is well led and managed. All adults work effectively as a happy team ensuring that children achieve well in all they do.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor teaching more rigorously so that the proportion of good teaching increases, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure that the high standard of marking seen in literacy is applied in other subjects, particularly mathematics.
- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity and religions of modern Britain.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. The national assessments in Year 2 for 2008 show broadly average standards. As a result of a high number of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities or being part of the additional provision for pupils with general learning difficulties, standards at the end of Year 6 were below average in 2008. The current Year 6 is on course to reach higher standards than in 2008. The school has been successful in improving standards in Year 2 but this has not filtered through to Year 6. Pupils with specific learning difficulties achieve well because they are effectively supported and their needs are catered for well. As pupils move through Years 3 to 6, their progress is not always as rapid as in other year groups because teaching is occasionally satisfactory rather than good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The respect and care shown for and by school captains illustrate pupils' good understanding of the importance of interacting well with each other. They all feel safe and confident that adult support will be prompt, thorough and fair if they have the need to call on it. Currently, poor attendance affects the achievement of a small number of pupils but the school works hard to encourage all pupils to attend regularly. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is broadly average. There is a thriving gardening club and the children maintain a local allotment, growing their own produce, which is distributed within the school and taken home to eat. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community and wider world through

fundraising for various charities and sponsoring a child in Peru. However, pupils' awareness of the range of cultures and religions represented in Britain today is not so strong.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In lessons, there is a good focus on personal development and care and pupils are encouraged to share ideas, reach corporate decisions and be reflective about their progress and the steps they need to take to improve further. This is a major factor in their good progress. Learning is good in lessons in the lower part of the school. However, in Years 3 to 6, learning is not so rapid because a small minority of teaching is less effective. In the few less effective lessons, teachers do not always plan activities that challenge higher attaining pupils or successfully cater for the different abilities within their classes. Homework is addressed effectively through 'Brain Builder' books, which detail homework tasks each night and which cover a curriculum area, for example history research, literacy or numeracy. These are marked well and pupils take obvious pride in the achievements within them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Links between the EYFS and Year 1 have been effectively developed and the Key Stage 1 curriculum builds well on what has gone before. The curriculum is enriched well by visitors invited into school. These particularly enhance pupils' personal development. Older pupils talk about the way in which the curriculum is being adapted to meet their needs and how this is helping them in their learning. Pupils with additional resource provision and those with specific difficulties receive an adapted curriculum that is effectively matched to their needs. Pupils generally have too few opportunities to learn about their own and the cultures of others. Good links with the local Arts Society have given the pupils opportunities to work with visiting artists and to perform at the city's De Montfort Hall.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is outstanding. There are excellent systems in place to ensure that no child with a problem falls through the net. Pupils with specific difficulties receive high quality support both from adults in school and from a wide range of outside agencies. Rigorous safeguarding procedures and robust health and safety measures and risk assessments are in place and ensure that pupils are kept as safe as possible. Pupils' progress is tracked regularly and very conscientiously in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Academic guidance is good in literacy and has a positive impact on helping pupils to move on to the next stage of their learning. Teachers' assessments of work in numeracy, while positive and identifying areas of weakness, do not always challenge pupils sufficiently or make it clear what they have to do to move their learning forward. Pupils like the recently introduced 'personalised learning logs' and they are being used effectively to set targets for individual pupils. These are starting to have an impact on pupils' improving learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Teamwork between the headteacher, staff and governors is good. All are committed to improving the school further. The system for monitoring pupils' progress is impressive. Monitoring of teaching is not well documented and the school has not been successful in making sure that teaching is good in all lessons. The school has developed good links with others, which benefits all pupils. For example, links with secondary schools make transition easy at the end of Year 6. There are a number of successful partnerships with the local community. However, the headteacher acknowledges that the school has not yet monitored its work related to promoting community cohesion in all its aspects. Most parents are very supportive of all that the school does. The governors are effectively involved and support and challenge leaders well.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

9 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stokes Wood Primary School, Leicester LE3 9BX

We would like to thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We especially enjoyed talking to you about all the things you do whilst you are in school. You all behave well and are polite and courteous to visitors. We know you like coming to school because you told us so. We are not surprised because you go to a good school.

These are the main things we found out about your school

- The large majority of you make good progress because you are taught well.
- The care and personal support you receive is excellent.
- The headteacher and governors, along with the other adults who work in the school, lead and manage the school well.
- You learn lots about the need to keep yourselves safe, eat healthily and take regular exercise.
- We were impressed with how you collect money each week to support a child in Peru and the work you do on your allotment.

We have asked the school to do three things to improve the education you receive.

- Make sure that your headteacher and teachers check how well you are being taught so that you all make good progress.
- Check that when teachers mark your books they make sure you are clear what you need to do to improve, especially in numeracy.
- Help you learn more about different religions and beliefs that are found in Britain today.

You can all help by continuing to work hard every day and attending regularly.

Best wishes

Nina Bee Lead inspector