

Stokesley Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121325
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327455
Inspection date	9 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Joy Frost HMI

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)	444
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Dawn Lloyd
Headteacher	Mr Scott McFarlane
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	No 5 Springfield Stokesley Middlesbrough North Yorkshire TS9 5EW

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	9 July 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The quality of provision in the new Early Years Foundation Stage unit.
- The progress made by pupils across the school in writing.
- How effectively teachers use data to plan for different groups of pupils.
- The impact of the school's strategies to improve attendance.
- How effectively the leadership and management evaluate the impact of their work.

The inspectors collected evidence from lesson observations; looking at pupils' work, assessment information and other documents; interviews and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and a group of governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report. At the time of the inspection there were no Year 6 pupils present as they were attending a transition day at the local comprehensive school.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school set in a market town. Children come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of children eligible for free schools meals is below that found nationally but rising year-on-year. Most pupils are from White British heritage but a few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and some are at the early stage of learning English as an additional language. Around 6% of pupils are from Traveller families. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Since the last inspection a new headteacher joined the school in September 2007, a Children's Centre was opened on the site in February 2008 and a new Early Years Foundation Stage unit opened in September 2008.

There is childcare and before-and after-school provision on site which are not registered to the governing body. These were inspected separately and the reports can be found on the Ofsted website. The Children's Centre is also subject to a separate inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which is the heart of the local community. Many beneficial changes have taken place in the last two years. The headteacher was instrumental in bringing a Children's Centre onto the site which is offering a range of well attended provision for the local community. Reorganisation of the school accommodation has enabled the opening of an Early Years Foundation Stage unit; the good quality of the provision is improving the progress and attainment of the youngest pupils.

This is a school which knows itself very well. Together with the governing body staff have identified many different groups within the community and they have worked tirelessly to engage all, including the Traveller community, to work more closely together. Parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the recent changes, as shown in the many parental questionnaires returned. Some parents expressed the views of many when they wrote, 'The headteacher clearly thinks about and cares for his staff and the children in his care', and 'We strongly feel that Stokesley Community Primary School has provided our son with every opportunity to be the best that he can be.'

Pupils' attainment on entering school is in line with typical age-related expectations overall but weaker in elements of communication, language and literacy. As they move through the school pupils make good progress in reading, mathematics and science and slightly slower progress in writing. At the end of Year 2, pupils consistently reach standards which are above those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in the last few years has been significantly above the national average in mathematics and science. Standards in English, although above the national average, have not been as high because writing is a weaker element. Newly introduced tracking systems are identifying where pupils are underachieving and the school acts quickly to intervene to accelerate progress. Staff deliver intervention strategies, including working closely with outside agencies to broker the necessary support for these pupils. Most of the interventions are relatively new and the school has yet to fully evaluate the impact of these on attainment.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. All pupils are courteous, well behaved and care for each other. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They are knowledgeable about how to live a healthy lifestyle; they make informed choices about eating healthy food and know the benefits of taking regular exercise. Pupils enjoy their education as evidenced in classrooms where they engage with the learning and form excellent relationships with teachers and each other. They make a good contribution to their local community through musical events, productions, charity fundraising and especially ecological projects to improve the school grounds and the local area. Most pupils are punctual, develop good basic skills and are well prepared for life beyond the school. Attendance, however, is satisfactory rather than good. The innovative work by the school to engage a small number of families who have persistent poor attendance is beginning to have a positive impact. Some pupils have raised their attendance markedly since the beginning of the initiative. Further work is planned and a 'walking bus' will operate from September. The school has also worked well to engage the Traveller community and ensure that when they are on site their children's attendance is good.

Most teaching seen during the inspection was good and contained some strong features. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give very clear instructions to pupils about what

they are going to learn. Lessons have a brisk pace, with many opportunities for pupils to talk together productively about their work and to carry out interesting and engaging problem-solving activities, especially in mathematics. Classrooms are lively and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to engage pupils, for instance by using video clips, and other adults are productively deployed to support pupils who may need more help. In a few satisfactory lessons teachers' instructions are less clear and there are too many learning objectives which confuse pupils. Also, different activities are set for groups of pupils in the lesson but these are not always matched closely enough to pupils' abilities. Marking of pupils' work is regular and tells pupils what they have done well and what the next steps in their learning are.

The good curriculum meets all statutory requirements and has undergone a complete overhaul over the last year. This has enabled teachers to teach to themes which make learning more meaningful and exciting. An excellent example is where pupils were learning about the Ancient Greeks in history. They wrote play scripts in their literacy lessons based on Greek mythology and used this information in design and technology to produce very good quality puppets. These were then used as the basis for puppet shows which the pupils filmed, using hand held video cameras and edited in information and communication technology to produce short DVDs. Pupils greatly enjoyed this work and it was of a high standard. There are many enrichment days and weeks attached to each theme where pupils dress up and get into the characters of the people they are studying. Specialist teaching of music, art and physical education has raised attainment in these subjects. A good range of visits and visitors is enhancing learning through first-hand experience and there is a wide and increasing range of extra-curricular clubs, for instance in music, French and sporting opportunities.

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Safeguarding requirements are met. Teachers know pupils very well and go out of their way to meet their needs. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and this is helping them make good progress. The school has identified different groups of pupils within the school who at times may need extra support, for instance, Traveller children, more able and talented pupils and those who are at the early stages of learning spoken English. Pupils have 'I can' targets which are shared with parents; these targets are helping all to know what pupils need to do to improve their work. The school has enabled all pupils to work together and value each other's culture. The work with the Traveller community and their families and the strong links with the Children's Centre are a real strength of the school.

The headteacher, ably supported by his deputy headteacher and the staff, has set an exceptionally clear direction for the school. The governing body is very knowledgeable and has supported the headteacher in making the recent changes. They have a strategic overview of where the school is going and are not afraid to challenge the school's work. Their work to promote community cohesion within the local community is very good and they have plans in place to develop this further. Their aim to develop the school into a 'learning campus' with facilities on site to meet the needs of all ages is well on the way to being achieved. Very good links with the after-school clubs and the Stepping Stones Playgroup is helping to bring about this vision. The schools' self-evaluation is accurate and involves leaders at all levels. Subject leaders are knowledgeable about their subject areas; they are involved in subject monitoring and are able to inform and support colleagues. They produce detailed action plans aimed at raising standards and achievement. For instance, the school's drive to raise standards by ensuring that all pupils achieve at least the national average and raising the attainment of the more able pupils in tests at the end of Year 2 and 6, has been successful. The school knows that staff

must now embed these new initiatives and focus their monitoring more closely on the impact that they are having on learning across the school, especially in writing. The recent improvements to accommodation, standards and the curriculum show that the school has a good capacity to improve further and gives good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Procedures for induction and transition are good and enable children to settle very quickly into school routines. All welfare requirements are met well. When children join the Nursery their skills and knowledge are typical of those expected for their age except in elements of communication, language and literacy. They make good and often very good progress through the Nursery and Reception classes and by the time they leave most are attaining above the national average. Standards in reading and writing are good and the introduction of many opportunities for children to write across the day is helping to raise progress in this area. The rigour with which all children are helped to learn and develop is an outstanding feature, for instance in the way boys are fully engaged in writing and reading tasks. The staff are knowledgeable about how young children learn and there is a good balance between teacher-directed tasks and those tasks children choose for themselves. This helps children to become independent learners and develop the key learning skills of listening, concentration and perseverance.

The Foundation Stage leader has a clear vision for the development of the unit and the school has secured funding to further develop the outdoor area into an innovative learning environment. The leader is a very good role model for the staff and ensures that everyone works together with a common goal. Staff assess children's learning regularly and have comprehensive records of what the children have achieved. Although the unit has only been in place for a year, it is becoming a model of good practice with other schools visiting from within and outside of the county.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in writing.
- Improve the consistency of the use of assessment data to ensure that activities match pupils' abilities in all lessons.
- Refine monitoring systems to focus more closely on the impact of the new initiatives on learning across the school.

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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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
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	2
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	1
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?	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

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

Inspection of Stokesley Community Primary School, Middlesbrough,

TS9 5EW

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me and Mrs Pringle when we visited your school recently to see how well you were doing. I am writing to tell you what we found. We agree with you and your parents that Stokesley Community Primary is a good school. We were especially impressed with your behaviour and how kind, polite and courteous you all were. You get along together very well. You all make the most of the opportunities on offer by attending the many sports and other clubs and by taking such an active part in your lessons. You told us that you enjoy the new curriculum and that lessons are more fun. You enjoy learning in this new way and we found that teachers are making sure that your lessons are stimulating and interesting with many opportunities for you to talk to each other about your learning.

We also found that the staff look after you very well, making sure that if you have any problems there is always someone you can go to help you sort them out. Your involvement in ecological initiatives, such as 'Go Green', is developing your knowledge of the local environment and you are helping to save the planet – well done!

We know that your headteacher and his staff have made many changes and we have asked them to make sure that they closely monitor what impact these are having on your learning. We have also asked them to check that they use the knowledge they collect about what you can do in your work to make sure that activities are not too hard or too easy for you. We also think that you can make even more progress in your writing and we have asked the school to help you to do this.

Most of you attend school regularly and are punctual but a few of you do not attend school often enough and this affects how much you learn. You can help the school by making sure that you attend school every day.

I wish you every success in your future education.