

Stockland CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113366
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311231
Inspection dates	27 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Luxton
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	17–19 September 2003
School address	Stockland Honiton Devon EX14 9EF
Telephone number	01404 881456
Fax number	01404 881456

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the performance of more able pupils in writing and of girls in science; how effectively pupils are involved in assessing how well they are doing; the quality of provision in art, music and drama; the extent to which children in Reception are encouraged to make choices for themselves; and how the school is developing pupils' dialogue in lessons to improve their reasoning skills. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, assessment and tracking records, observations of the school at work, discussions with staff, and pupils. The parental questionnaire responses were analysed. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail, but the inspector 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 the report.

Description of the school

This small rural school is popular and oversubscribed. Most children who start in the Reception class have levels of skill above those expected for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that provides its pupils with a wide range of very stimulating and exciting learning experiences. All pupils benefit from an ethos that cherishes them as individuals and is committed to each child achieving their full potential. Parents are rightly proud of the education provided for their children. They are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, with one parental comment being typical of many: 'All the staff are fantastic and the standard of education that the children get is exceptional. The expectations for each child to achieve their best are high and this is reflected in the standard of their work.'

At the heart of the school's success are very strong leadership and management, which have had a significant impact on improving provision in recent years. The headteacher is an inspirational leader who provides powerful direction for the school. Staff with management responsibilities and all involved in the life of the school share his vision for future development. Despite the very high standards that pupils achieve, the school is not complacent and there is a relentless drive to bring about further improvement. This is evident in the way the school is exploring ways of improving the quality of dialogue in lessons to deepen pupils' understanding and improve their reasoning skills. There is currently an emphasis on developing pupils' individual roles within group activities and their questioning and discussion skills. Evidence points towards pupils becoming more involved in their own learning and being less dependent on direction from their teachers, although this is at an early stage of development.

The school's self-evaluation is extremely accurate, enabling it to identify areas in need of development and take decisive action to improve provision. For example, careful analysis of assessment information identified that girls were not doing as well as boys in science. A variety of strategies was put into place, such as single-gender groupings for older pupils, and these have proved successful in raising the achievement of girls. In the national tests for Year 6 in 2007 the attainment of girls in science was slightly higher than that of boys.

By the end of Year 6 the standards that pupils attain in English, mathematics and science in recent years have been consistently well above average. In all three subjects a very high proportion of pupils have achieved the highest level attainable. This represents outstanding achievement for pupils from their various starting points on entering school. The results in writing for more able pupils in the 2007 national tests were not as high as in previous years. The school's data shows these results did not reflect their normal high level of work. The school has set itself a challenging target for the proportion of pupils on track to reach the highest level in writing in 2008. Children do not quite make the same very high rates of progress in the Foundation Stage as in the rest of the school. Leaders and teachers have recently taken positive actions to bring about improvements, but a little more time is needed for them to have their full impact.

Pupils behave in an exemplary manner and are very kind and considerate towards others. They show much enjoyment in coming to school and say their lessons are interesting, especially when they are practical. As one pupil typically commented, 'School is great and I enjoy my lessons. When I get stuck in understanding

mathematics, the teachers help me and make it fun.' Pupils happily take on responsibility in school, such as by organising inter-house events, and also make a positive impact on village life, for example, by raising money for local charities. They have a very good understanding of the need to eat healthily and to take regular exercise, as shown in the very high take-up of the many out-of-school sporting activities. Pupils know how to stay safe, acting responsibly as they move in and around school. They are acquiring an outstanding preparation for their future lives.

Relationships at all levels are excellent and lead to classrooms being calm and friendly places in which to learn. Teachers plan their lessons very effectively by building on previous work so that pupils can use their prior knowledge and understanding to support their current learning. As a consequence, the vast majority make outstanding progress. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for all pupils throughout the school, particularly in mathematics so that each year group can be taught separately. Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in assessing how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve. This, too, plays an important role in the excellent progress that they make. Pupils show very good attitudes to their work and are keen to learn and improve their performance in all subjects.

A wide range of enrichment activities extends the curriculum very effectively. There are many out-of-school clubs for pupils to join and they are able to work with a variety of visitors and to take part in educational visits to widen their horizons. There is high quality provision for art, music and drama, which results in very high standards in these subjects. Fundamental to this is the good use of staff expertise, which provides specialist teaching across the school. Pupils are able to take part in a variety of high quality musical and drama performances that add significantly to their personal and social development.

Parents are particularly pleased with the way the school cares for their children. Pastoral support is very strong, with comprehensive safeguarding procedures in place to ensure pupils' well-being and safety. Academic guidance is another strength of the school and ensures that pupils are very clear about how to achieve the targets set for them to improve their performance. There are strong links with outside agencies to provide extra support for individual pupils when required. This is an important factor in the excellent progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school's recent track record shows it has excellent capacity to make any necessary further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Excellent links with pre-school providers and a high quality of care enable children to settle quickly into the Reception class. Good provision ensures children make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly in their literacy and mathematical skills. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1 most of them are exceeding the levels expected for their age in all areas of the curriculum. Activities are practical and stimulating and effectively capture children's interests. The assessment of children's attainment in the past has not always been sufficiently accurate, sometimes leading to work not being challenging enough. Leaders have taken effective steps to rectify this situation and assessments are now secure. Work is much better matched to all

children's individual needs. Recent improvements to the curriculum have also been made, with more opportunities being provided for children to initiate activities for themselves. However, the school recognises there is still more to be done to help children to develop their independent learning skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Boost children's skills of independence in Reception, by providing more opportunities for them to make choices for themselves.
- Extend pupils' ability in questioning and discussion to deepen their understanding and improve their reasoning skills.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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?	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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
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

28 November 2007

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Stockland Church of England Primary School, Honiton, Devon
EX14 9EF**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting you and seeing the things you do. I found your school to be outstanding. It helps you to achieve very well, and attain standards by the end of Year 6 that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. You also attain very high standards in art, music, drama and physical education.

The main reasons for your excellent progress are the way your school is led and managed and the high quality of teaching that you receive. Teachers give you interesting things to do so that you enjoy going to school and are keen to do well. The leaders of your school do an excellent job in helping it to continue improving. For example, the school is working hard to help you develop your reasoning skills by improving the quality of your questions and discussions. In addition, teachers are aware that they need to give more opportunities to children in Reception so that they can make choices for themselves.

You behave in an exemplary way and are growing into mature and responsible young people. You enjoy your work and are getting better at deciding what you need to do next to improve it. The curriculum gives you many excellent opportunities to extend your learning. These include the many out-of-school clubs you can join and the wide range of visits and visitors you experience. You told me you especially enjoy the variety of sporting activities in which you can take part. All adults take very good care of you and ensure you are safe while in school.

What I have asked your school to do now:

- Provide more opportunities for children in Reception to make choices for themselves.
- Extend your ability in using questions and discussion to improve your reasoning skills.

You can help too by keeping up the excellent work you are doing. I hope you continue to enjoy your learning and remain being kind and considerate to others.

Best wishes
Melvyn Hemmings
Lead inspector