

Stockingford Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125542
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	328353
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Usha Devi HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Nobel
Headteacher	Kevin Smart
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Grove Road Stockingford Nuneaton CV10 8JY
Telephone number	024 76382167
Fax number	024 76642310

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Stockingford Junior School is a larger than average junior school which shares a site with a large infant school and an Early Years Centre & Library. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is not English are below the national averages. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The school has been awarded the Activemark in recognition of its work.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Stockingford Junior is a satisfactory and improving school. It has some good features. The personal development and well-being of pupils is good. In this friendly and supportive community, pupils grow in confidence and develop a positive self-image. The school helps pupils to become mature by seeking and acting on their views; for example school council recommendations have resulted in the purchase of additional playground equipment.

Pupils enter the school with standards that are broadly average. They make satisfactory progress overall and leave the school with levels of attainment that are broadly average. Current assessment information and pupils' work show that standards are steadily rising in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and some pupils are making good progress. Nevertheless, the school has identified that rates of progress vary as pupils move through the school, and that all groups of pupils are capable of making faster progress and reaching higher standards.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In some lessons, pupils make good and sometimes better progress because teachers provide interesting and practical activities. An example of this was seen in a science lesson when the teacher very effectively set up tests of water take-up by plants. This activity promoted good responses from pupils and challenged their thinking. The school gathers extensive information about pupils' attainment and progress. However, teachers do not always use this information to plan and provide activities which accurately meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The school's system for setting targets is developing. Staff have recently introduced end of year targets for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. However, these are not sufficiently challenging and pupils are not yet sure of their individual targets. Teachers' marking is variable throughout the school. It does not always provide pupils with the clear guidance they need to improve.

The satisfactory curriculum is effectively enriched through 'Big Deal' projects which place a strong emphasis on pupils' learning in different ways and making links across subjects. For instance, Year 3, during a project about the Amazon Rainforest, turned a shared area into a floor to ceiling 'rainforest' with sounds, information, images, textures and smells. This is now used as a learning resource by other pupils in the school, including the nursery and infant children who share the same school site.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The headteacher is an enthusiastic and caring leader who is firmly committed to making Stockingford Junior into a school where pupils are encouraged to develop their curiosity and imagination and achieve high standards. Staff and governors share his vision for the school. Pupils are well cared for and staff and learning mentors provide effective support for pupils. Senior leaders have introduced a number of initiatives to improve provision, such as a whole-school approach to teaching mathematical skills and developing pupils' writing. These are leading to better rates of progress. However, the impact of these changes has yet to be fully realised in all classes. Inconsistencies remain in the progress made by pupils in the school because senior leaders do not always make best use of information collected from monitoring and evaluation to identify the actions they need to take to raise achievement for all pupils. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further by ensuring a consistently good rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics as pupils move through the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching by making better use of assessment information to plan and provide activities which accurately meet the needs of different groups of pupils.
- Ensure pupils are set challenging targets, they know what their targets are and they understand what they need to do to achieve them.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by ensuring senior teachers use their findings from monitoring and evaluation to raise further the achievement of all pupils.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When pupils enter the school, their attainment is broadly average. Attainment in the current Year 6 has improved in English, mathematics and science, with the majority of pupils working at expected levels. A greater proportion of pupils in Year 6 have exceeded the levels expected for their age than previously. Standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. Achievement between Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and improving with some pupils making good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the more able make similar progress to their peers. The school's latest assessment information shows that there are variations between subjects and classes. For instance, in most classes, standards in reading are higher than in writing and mathematics. In art, pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress. This is because activities provide an appropriate level of challenge, encourage pupils to be creative and give them the opportunity to communicate their ideas using a wide range of materials and techniques.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and say most lessons are 'fun'. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils' contribution to the school and the wider community is good. They raise money for a range of charities and sell items such as cakes they have made at home during organised events, such as the Victorian Fair. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils in lessons and around school is good. The few pupils who sometimes find it difficult to behave appropriately are given good individual support. Pupils are safety conscious, moving sensibly around the school. They know how to keep healthy and put this into practice by adopting a healthy diet and taking plenty of exercise. Through their time in school, pupils develop the self-confidence and personal skills that prepare them well for their future, but develop their numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology skills satisfactorily. Attendance is satisfactory. Despite the school's strenuous efforts, a few pupils do not have a good record of attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

While there is some good teaching in lessons, teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have good relationships with their classes and these are reflected in the pupils' good concentration and behaviour. In some lessons, high teacher expectations, combined with practical activities, gain the pupils' attention, make lessons fun and enhance progress. An example of this was seen in Year 6 when pupils used an 'author's chair' to share their ideas with the class. However, this effective practice is not found consistently throughout the school. In some lessons, the pace of learning slows because teachers spend too long talking to the whole class and do not leave enough time for independent learning. In too many classes, teachers do not always make best use of assessment information to provide activities which provide a suitable level of challenge for pupils of different abilities. Teaching assistants give sensitive support to pupils, including those with behavioural or learning difficulties, and are involved effectively with pupils' learning during lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Provision for literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology is satisfactory. The focus on improving and ensuring progression of basic literacy and numeracy is underdeveloped. The planning for these subjects does not always build on previous learning because it is not regularly updated in light of ongoing assessments about pupils' attainment. The curriculum has been collectively revised by teachers with a focus on making learning more interesting and meaningful. Consequently, teachers are increasingly making links across subjects. This has made the curriculum more exciting and had a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment. The school ensures that pupils receive a good education in subjects such as art and music, both in taught time and in the good range of extra-curricular classes and clubs. The school effectively enriches the curriculum through a varied programme of trips, in the locality, in London and abroad, and through themed events such as the Brazilian day.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel safe because the school provides good pastoral care and support. The school works effectively with parents and a range of agencies, and staff know pupils and their families well. The procedures for safeguarding and child protection are appropriate. Pupils in need of additional support are identified quickly and effective plans put in place to give them access to the specialised help where it is needed. This means that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the few pupils who do not always behave appropriately take a full part in the school. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The school is in the process of introducing systems for class teachers to more closely monitor the progress of individual pupils. Pupils are not yet sufficiently aware of their end of year targets. Teachers' marking is inconsistent. It does not always provide pupils with the guidance they need to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The collective leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher and staff have worked well as a team to develop an ethos where pupils' views are listened to and acted upon. The headteacher, for instance, meets regularly with pupils from all classes to discuss safeguarding and to check they feel well looked after. The whole-school system for tracking progress provides senior staff with an accurate picture of individual pupils' progress as well as the progress of different groups, such as boys and girls. However, not enough has been done to ensure that this information is used to set challenging targets. School self-evaluation is satisfactory. The school has a sound view of its own performance, although it is sometimes too generous. This is because, when senior leaders monitor and evaluate the work of the school and identify strengths and areas for development, they place too much emphasis on what staff do and not enough on the achievement of pupils. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and are developing the skills required to hold the school to account for the standards reached by pupils and check for themselves on how well the school is doing. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. The school is in the process of developing links with schools abroad.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

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

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	3
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

10 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stockingford Junior School, Nuneaton, CV10 8JY

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you about your work. We would like to say a special thank you to all the children who came to talk to us about their work and share their experiences about the school. Thank you for inviting us to the Brazil Day activities and for showing us your art work. We liked your Salvador Dali-inspired landscapes.

Stockingford Junior School is a satisfactory and improving school. It is helping you to make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. We were pleased to find that some of you are making good and better progress in these subjects. Here is what we found:

- You are friendly, polite and have a good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy.
- All the adults who work with you help you to feel safe and take good care of you.
- You have good attitudes to learning and especially like lessons which are challenging and practical.
- Mr Smart, the staff and governors are working hard to improve the way you learn so that lessons are fun and exciting. You told us how much you enjoy the Big Deal projects. We were impressed with the Year 3 Amazon Rainforest.

We have asked Mr Smart, the staff and governors to help you make even better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. We have asked your teachers to give you activities that challenge you in all lessons. We have also asked them to make sure you know what your learning targets are and what you need to do to achieve them. Finally, we have asked all the senior teachers to carefully check how well you are doing and to make sure you are helped to achieve your very best. You can help by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Thank you once again to the adults that work with you, the governors, the office staff, the site manager and you for being so friendly. We wish you the very best for the future.

Usha Devi

Her Majesty's Inspector