

Stanion Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122112
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380405
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Steven Hill

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Tyler
Headteacher	Andrea Revens
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with members of staff, the Chair of the Governing body and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, particularly that concerned with safeguarding pupils and the tracking of their progress. Pupils were observed at lunchtimes and break-times. Samples of pupils' books were scrutinised, and displays around the school analysed. Questionnaires were checked from older pupils, staff and from 69 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are pupils making enough progress during Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics?
- Do leaders have a clear enough view of the progress of individuals and groups from term to term?
- Do pupils have enough opportunities to interact with people from contrasting communities beyond the immediate locality?

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school in a village location. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. There have been several staffing changes since the last inspection, including a new headteacher.

There is a pre-school provision on the site which is managed privately and inspected separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides a good education, so that pupils make good progress academically and in their well-being. They feel extremely safe in school and behave well. Pupils' social and moral understanding is very well developed, and they have extremely good relationships with each other and with staff. A group of Year 6 pupils all agreed that Stanion is '...a really friendly school'. The school is a happy and harmonious community where boys and girls get on well together regardless of background. Their great enjoyment of school promotes their high attendance. Good systems for pupils' care, support and guidance underpin the many strengths in their personal development. Community cohesion is promoted extremely effectively in school, and pupils make a good contribution to village life. However, their opportunities to engage with people from contrasting communities, in the United Kingdom and beyond, are limited.

Achievement is good. Overall attainment is consistently above average by the end of Year 6 although, for several years, standards in mathematics were lower than those in English. The most recent results show a major improvement in progress in mathematics, with over two-thirds of pupils in Year 6 gaining the higher Level 5 in 2011. Progress is good across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' writing, by Years 5 and 6, is sophisticated in construction, showing imagination and mature use of vocabulary. However, few pupils write in a fluent joined hand, and work samples show too many spelling errors and too much careless punctuation. This was enough to prevent some pupils reaching Level 5 in writing, despite the high quality of the content of their work.

Pupils make good progress because of good teaching and a curriculum which increasingly engages pupils' enthusiasm through making meaningful links between different subjects. Teachers manage classes efficiently, often making good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance their explanations and gain pupils' interest. They make very good use of the school's assessment systems to ensure work is matched to the different needs of individuals. This is possible because the headteacher has introduced very much more sophisticated systems to track closely the progress of each pupil. Staff use the results of this to ensure that any pupils who start to fall behind are quickly identified and provided with extra help, so they can catch up. Similarly, the monitoring of lessons, of planning and of pupils' work has enabled the headteacher accurately to identify issues in the school that need action. Plans are already in place, for example, to improve the school's contribution to community cohesion. This demonstrates good capacity for sustained

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improvement. Teachers work extremely successfully as a team to address priorities that are identified, but have had relatively little involvement themselves in the monitoring process.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consolidate pupils' good writing skills by raising the quality of their spelling, punctuation and handwriting by the end of Year 6, particularly by:
 - ensuring that pupils consistently use a fluent, joined handwriting style from an earlier age, linking this to spelling patterns
 - capitalising on older pupils' good peer-evaluation skills, so they can help each other to eliminate careless mistakes in punctuation and spelling.
- Extend the school's strengths in promoting community cohesion locally to contrasting communities in the United Kingdom and beyond.
- Involve class teachers more in the monitoring of provision and outcomes for pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most children start school with attainment that matches expectations for their age, and, in most years, several exceed these expectations, with few not meeting them. Boys and girls achieve equally well and greatly enjoy their education. They make good progress in lessons, and develop very good collaborative skills. For example, in an outstanding lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils worked extremely effectively in groups to evaluate how well different beginnings to well-known stories drew the reader's interest. They organised themselves purposefully, shared ideas animatedly, and listened carefully to each other's suggestions. Older pupils, in particular, are good at helping each other to evaluate their success with particular tasks, although they do not often focus on spelling and punctuation.

Pupils work hard and are keen to do their best. During a good mathematics lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils concentrated when working with adults, at tasks that were accurately matched to their different abilities, while their classmates showed perseverance in working independently. As a result, they all made good progress in their understanding of adding different sums of money. In a lesson on design and technology, pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked effectively together in pairs to invent and paint different 'sign-posts' to explain the circulation of the blood, taking great care in their painting. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their classmates. They receive work that is carefully matched to their needs, and adults working with them ensure that they are encouraged to be as independent as possible, balancing well-judged challenge with extra help when needed.

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Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are accepting of others, and show respect for different faiths and beliefs, as was seen when older pupils sensitively discussed Hinduism in a religious education lesson. Pupils feel extremely safe in the school, and are confident that the adults will deal with any problems that arise, and also that their classmates will look after them and help them if they need it. They know how to keep themselves safe in different situations. Their behaviour is good, and is often outstanding in the oldest class. A tiny proportion of younger pupils sometimes struggle to conform to expectations, but adults in the school consistently handle any lapses in behaviour, so that learning is not interrupted.

Pupils make a good contribution to the community in formal ways, such as their participation in the school council and the eco-council, but particularly in the way they support each other. Older pupils show great care and kindness for younger ones, and are looking forward to the new scheme to support them with their reading. During an assembly, pupils in the oldest class unselfconsciously praised the ways that their classmates had helped them to cope with challenges during their recent residential trip.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, including making sensible food choices, and take up opportunities for exercise enthusiastically. Their good basic skills, including in ICT, prepare them very well for their future, both in school and beyond.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

Most teaching is good and a few lessons are outstanding. Teachers make good use of a range of strategies to involve all pupils in the lesson, often getting them to discuss their work in pairs to sort their ideas out. Pupils are given very clear targets for how to improve, which they know well, and marking is used effectively to give them ongoing feedback about how they can progress next time. Classes are managed effectively, with good provision of practical experiences that make learning more exciting. A key strength of teaching is the way teachers monitor pupils’ ongoing progress, intervening to correct misconceptions, but also to challenge pupils to extend their thinking and refine their work. Teachers have high expectations but this does not always extend to the quality of pupils’ spelling and punctuation.

The curriculum has recently been changed to provide more links between different subjects. This has proved very successful in making learning more interesting and meaningful for pupils. Year 6, for example, told an inspector that their topic on the Tudors is ‘brilliant,’ and that they ‘really loved Macbeth.’ The science curriculum is much better than at the last inspection, with pupils having more opportunities to undertake investigations, although they do not always have much opportunity to plan investigations for themselves. There is an excellent range of after-school clubs for such a small school. These are well-attended and pupils at both key stages are very positive about them.

Pupils are carefully looked after. Day-to-day pastoral care from staff consistently reinforces positive behaviour and attitudes, with pupils themselves contributing well. They told an inspector that, ‘Everyone looks after each other,’ so the school is ‘...really safe!’ Good use is made of outside agencies to support the well-being of any pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, and good liaison with parents and carers reinforces this. Transition arrangements for children starting school are particularly strong.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, staff all work together as an effective team, and have successfully improved provision and the consequent achievement and well-being of pupils. Monitoring by the headteacher has been

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regular and effective, and results have been shared with colleagues to help improve practice. Staff respond very well but, because of other, more urgent priorities, most have had relatively few opportunities to be involved in monitoring for themselves. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed, particularly in tracking pupils' progress more effectively. This has supported the school's good promotion of equal opportunities, so that any potential gaps in attainment are identified and addressed. Differences in the past between boys' and girls' performance have been eliminated.

Governance is good. Governors have good systems to find out the school's strengths and weaknesses, so are able to offer a good level of support as well as challenge. They undertake effective training, including in safeguarding, helping to ensure that safeguarding procedures are good. Staff and governors monitor this effectively, and are quick to respond to any issues or concerns.

The school involves parents and carers effectively in the school, consulting them about important issues. It gives them good information about their children's progress, as well as day-to-day life in school. The school has strong links with other local schools to enhance the curriculum, making good use of some outside specialists, to run sports clubs, for example. The school promotes community cohesion very well internally and in the village, but this is under-developed beyond the local area.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception class shares many of the strengths of the rest of the school, including an interesting curriculum and good teaching. There is a good balance between activities that children choose for themselves and those that are teacher-directed,

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and children enjoy both. Good relationships are quickly established with children when they start, backed up by a programme of home visits by the teacher, and visits of children and their parents and carers to school. Children settle quickly and happily into the school, behave well and get on well with each other. Good use is made of the well-equipped outside area, as was seen during a good lesson when many children dug for ‘treasure’ in the sandpit, while others played with large construction equipment or rode tricycles. The teacher is skilled at observing and assessing children’s play, intervening effectively to extend their learning and develop their thinking and vocabulary. Assessments are used effectively to match work to children’s interests and their attainment. Attainment has gone up in the past few years, since the Reception children have been taught as a separate class. They make good progress in their learning and, by the end of Reception, attainment is above local and national averages in all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The higher than average level of response to the questionnaire shows that the vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about the school and what it provides for their children. They particularly value that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and that the teaching is good so their children make good progress. A few parents and carers expressed reservations about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. The behaviour observed during the inspection was good from the vast majority of pupils, and was excellent from the oldest pupils. A few lapses in behaviour from one or two younger pupils were dealt with sensitively but firmly by staff. Pupils themselves were very positive about behaviour in their questionnaires, and in conversation were confident that staff will always sort out any problems.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stanion Church of England (Aided) Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 101 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	65	23	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	74	18	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	38	55	27	39	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	46	32	46	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	54	30	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	34	49	32	46	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	46	31	45	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	36	37	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	31	45	30	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	36	29	42	8	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	36	36	52	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	38	36	52	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	39	56	28	40	0	0	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



29 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stanion Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Stanion, NN14 1BY

Thank you for your warm welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and were impressed by your hard work in lessons. You told us that you enjoyed lessons, as well as the many interesting clubs you go to. We were pleased to see that you behave well, and that you all get along together. It was good to see how kind the older pupils are to the younger children.

Your school gives you a good education. You make good progress because the teachers are skilled at helping you to learn. Your standards are generally better than those in most schools in English and mathematics. You are good readers, and have some wonderful ideas in your writing, but some of you need to take greater care with your handwriting, spelling and punctuation. I have agreed with your headteacher that this is going to be a priority this year. You get lots of interesting things to do, especially in some of your new topics, and you learn a lot about different people around the world. However, you do not have much chance to interact with people from communities beyond your part of Northamptonshire. The school already has plans to improve this.

The adults organise the school successfully. They keep a careful eye on how everyone is getting on, so that they can make sure that if anyone needs any extra help then they get it. The headteacher does most of the work in checking up on how things are going, and we have asked that the other teachers should take more of a share in this in future. The adults are all keen to make the school even better, and you can help by keeping up your hard work and behaviour, and by trying particularly hard with your handwriting, spelling and punctuation.

We hope you enjoy the rest of the year at Stanion.

Yours sincerely

Steven Hill
Lead inspector

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