

# Stanton Harcourt CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123113
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314500
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Collins

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jane Watts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Julie Quarrell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 July 2004
<b>School address</b>	Stanton Harcourt Witney OX29 5RJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 881948
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Most pupils of this much smaller than average village school are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below average but with increasing numbers of pupils with speech and language problems. Numbers of pupils in each year group are small and vary significantly from year to year. A voluntary management committee provides a popular after-school club. The school has achieved Healthy Schools, Eco, Activemark and BECTA Computing Awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This outstanding school lies at the heart of its community, and at its heart is a strong concern for the personal and academic development of all its pupils. This shows in the outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning shown by all pupils, much higher than average standards and the way in which it has developed an imaginative and creative curriculum. Due to the small numbers of pupils involved and the variation between cohorts, it is difficult sometimes to make reliable comparisons of standards from year to year and over time. Nevertheless, current tracking and assessment data show that standards have improved significantly from 2007 and are now well above average by the end of Year 6 and Year 2. From average starting points on entry, achievement is outstanding. Rigorous assessment and tracking of progress enables the school to plan very effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, including the increasing number with speech and language difficulties. All pupils are making very good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

The great majority of parents support the work of the school seeing the school as a place where children are able to flourish. One parent wrote describing it as 'a place where children learn to play and help each other'. Pupils say they feel valued and able to develop independence and take responsibility. They see school as a place where learning is fun, and this shows in their eagerness to take part in lessons. Academic guidance and support are outstanding. Marking gives pupils valuable support in helping them to see the next step in their learning. It is used particularly effectively in helping older pupils develop evaluations of their own work and that of their peers.

A capable and dedicated staff delivers the outstanding curriculum very effectively. Sporting activities, music, art and the after-school club contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Teaching is consistently good or better. All classrooms are characterised by a welcoming and safe environment where learning is valued. Imaginative and exciting topics make very good use of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to extend their knowledge and understanding. Pupils work very well together in pairs or small groups, which helps to develop their social skills of cooperation and collaboration.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. It plays a significant part in their personal development and sense of well-being. They are quick to celebrate the achievements of others as well as their own and have a well-developed concern for the welfare of each other. However, during discussions with pupils, it was apparent that they have a less well-developed knowledge and understanding of the values and beliefs of cultures other than their own.

The major driving force behind these improvements has been the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, a fact much appreciated by many parents. She has created a very strong team of teachers and subject leaders who have had a significant impact on moving the school forward. Their drive to raise standards and achievement and the way the school has successfully addressed the issues from the last inspection indicates the school has a very good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children get off to an outstanding start in the Reception class. Levels of attainment are broadly as expected when children join school, with an increasing number needing additional support in social and language development. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is good. Careful and thorough assessment enables staff to plan the next steps in learning very effectively. Consistently good teaching ensures children make very good progress in attaining the early learning goals expected of them in personal, language, creative and physical development by the end of reception class. Progress in mathematical skills is good. Children are stimulated to learn in a warm, welcoming and safe environment, where staff make very good use of both outdoor and indoor areas. Well-planned activities promote children's independence very well by giving them opportunities to choose their own areas of learning through play. Social development is outstanding and children are able to exercise safely and become independent.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Maintain standards through continuing to challenge all groups of pupils to achieve their best.
- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Test and assessment results in 2007 for Year 6 showed a decline from the previous year. The 2007 cohort had a higher number of children with language learning difficulties than other years, which resulted in fewer pupils working at the higher than expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Current tracking data shows that this decline has been reversed significantly. Standards are now much higher than average at both the expected and higher levels in Year 6. Standards in Year 2 have also improved and are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Very good support for pupils with speech and language difficulties enables them to attain well in reading and writing. Achievement overall is outstanding. Pupils are making very good progress because of very good teaching, strong leadership by subject leaders in English, mathematics and science and the very effective use of assessment to identify any areas of under-achievement.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The school is very active in village life, helping pupils develop a strong sense of their place in the community. Their understanding of other communities however is less well developed. The Eco club and school council give pupils responsibilities and encourages them to contribute to the life of the school. The Eco club, for example, is developing in pupils a strong awareness of care for the environment. Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They have a willingness to learn which shows in the ways they are keen to contribute to lessons, willing to take responsibilities and eagerly take part in class discussions. Relationships are very good and pupils say they feel safe and confident in approaching adults for help. Their behaviour is excellent. They have a very good sense of a healthy lifestyle and readily take opportunities for

additional exercise at break-times. Social skills are developed very well through paired and group working and pupils are encouraged to become independent in their learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Rigorous monitoring by the headteacher and other staff has led to consistently good and often better teaching. This is one of the main reasons why pupils are making excellent progress. Lessons are creatively planned and very well managed. Tasks are suitably challenging enabling pupils of all abilities to achieve well. This contributes strongly to their personal development through raising their self-esteem and confidence. Many parents wrote appreciating the work of the staff, one writing that 'the curriculum is delivered in an imaginative and innovative way'. Pupils themselves say that there are 'lots of fun and creative ways of learning'. They are enthusiastic about learning and settle quickly to their tasks maintaining a high pace to lessons. Teachers make very effective use of tracking data and assessments enabling needs to be quickly identified. Good support by teaching assistants makes a positive contribution to the attainment of pupils with speech and language learning difficulties.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school has developed an outstanding curriculum imaginatively and creatively and this plays a major part in pupils' enjoyment of school. Very good links across subjects means that skills in literacy, numeracy and communication technology play an increasingly effective role in extending pupil's knowledge and understanding. Their topic on filmmaking, which included an 'Oscars evening' complete with red carpet and stretch limo, was a highlight of village life. Pupils have enjoyed great success in regional and national art competitions and are proud to talk of their achievements. There are many practical opportunities for investigation and working in small groups helps develop their social skills. The curriculum is enriched by a series of well-planned visits and visitors, which contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment and achievement. Extra curricular clubs and activities and the after-school Peacock Club contribute effectively to pupil's being active and healthy.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

There is a very well developed partnership between home and school, which welcomes parents as partners in their children's learning. This is recognised and valued by the great majority of parents who support the work of the school. They see the school, as one wrote, as 'providing a kind, nurturing environment where every child is valued'. Safeguarding and health and safety procedures are secure and fully comply with statutory requirements. Pupils themselves say, 'There is always someone to look after you'. They feel safe and this contributes well to their sense of being part of a community. Very effective monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress ensures that needs are quickly identified and support from outside agencies and teaching assistants is put in place. This is particularly effective for the increasing numbers of pupils with speech and language difficulties, who are able to make progress equally as good as other groups.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, very ably supported by other staff, has been the major driving force in raising standards and achievement. She has created a strong team of leaders who are very effective in managing the development of their subjects. The inclusion of all pupils is central to the work of the school and parents are appreciative of the way their children are supported to achieve their best. Self-evaluation is accurate and used well to identify appropriate targets for improvement. All leaders have a very clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and share a common purpose in bringing about improvements. This has played a major part in the drive to raise standards and achievement. Challenging targets have been set in English and mathematics. The school receives strong backing from the governors, who are supportive, whilst at the same time challenging the school and holding it to account for its decisions.

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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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2
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 the 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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

05 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stanton Harcourt CofE Primary School, Witney, OX29 5RJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. You helped me a great deal by talking to me and showing me your work. The school council and Eco group told me this is a good school but in fact, I think it is outstanding.

Here are some of the very good things the school is doing.

- The headteacher, other staff and the governors are doing an excellent job in running the school.
- I agree with you that you have very good teachers who make learning fun and interesting.
- Your standards are very good in reading, writing, mathematics and science and you achieve very well.
- Your behaviour and attitudes to your work are excellent.

I have asked the school to do a couple of things that I hope will make it even better.

- Make sure teachers keep challenging you and helping you all to do your very best.
- I have asked them to improve your knowledge and understanding about the different groups of people living in our country.

You go to a very good school and I hope it is even more successful in the future in helping you to achieve your very best. Remember you can help by working hard. If you are stuck, ask your teachers, I am sure they will help.

My very best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely

John Collins

Lead Inspector