

Mount Stewart Junior School

Mount Stewart Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, HA3 0JX

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The confident and determined headteacher has worked closely with staff, governors and parents to build an uncompromising vision of a successful school at the heart of its community, and within a short time has gained the confidence and commitment of all. The result is a harmonious and cohesive school community.
- Teaching is outstanding and, as a result, pupils make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the time they reach Year 6, pupils do much better than their peers nationally in English and mathematics. Overall, they do extremely well.
- Pupils from different groups, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those with additional funding under pupil premium and those who speak English as an additional language, make better than expected progress.
- High standards are expected for behaviour, and pupils show very positive attitudes towards their learning and behave extremely well. They enjoy being at school, feel safe, and take full advantage of the many opportunities given to them through clubs and visits.
- The excellent range of topics and themes contributes to the pupils' strong social skills, their sensitive moral awareness and the care and respect they show to each other.
- Marking and feedback to pupils are strong in English and mathematics, but less effective in other subjects. This is because teachers do not assess specific skills in these subjects often enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 18 lessons or part lessons and observed 13 teachers.
- Joint observations were conducted with senior leaders, including a learning walk which involved brief visits to lessons in Year 6. In addition, inspectors conducted a work scrutiny with a senior leader to examine the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan, and those relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, met with different groups of pupils, interviewed a sample of staff, and spoke to groups of parents. They also spoke to members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents were sought at the start and end of the school day, and through the school's surveys. There were 35 responses to Parent View. They also considered comments from 15 staff.

Inspection team

Brian Netto, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maura Docherty

Additional Inspector

David Webster

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mount Stewart is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and most of these speak English as an additional language. The largest ethnic minority group is Asian Indian.
- A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2011, and the deputy headteacher in September 2012.
- The school shares the same site with an infant school. It also shares a breakfast club with the infant school but as this is managed by the other school, it did not form part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of feedback in lessons and through marking in subjects other than English and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that the school's assessment policy is consistently applied across the school
 - checking the development of skills that are specific to these subjects more regularly so that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils arrive in Year 3 with above average skills for their age. Over several years, pupils have attained highly in reading, writing and mathematics, considerably above the national averages in these subjects. Pupils make outstanding progress across the school. This progress is occasionally accelerated in Years 5 and 6 through well-targeted support for any pupil in danger of not reaching their full potential.
- 'Life-long learners reach great heights': the school's motto reflects the high ambitions that the pupils have for themselves, and the high standards achieved over the last few years.
- Pupils at risk of not performing well make progress in line with their peers. This is because the work they do matches their abilities, engages their interest and requires their close attention.
- Pupils experience consistently high expectations in all lessons. As a result, all groups of pupils make outstanding progress, including those eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are provided with excellent language support, so those with little English on arrival and those who are more fluent make outstanding progress in line with other pupils.
- In one lesson, pupils in Year 6 made rapid progress in their writing of an alternative story ending because the 'steps to success' spelled out what made a good piece of writing, and they used these well in pairs to help them identify what else to include. They were thoroughly engaged with the work, and worked well on their own and with others.
- Pupils' skills in communication, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are highly developed by the time they reach Year 6. They make consistent use of these skills across different topics and themes which cover a range of subjects.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is characterised by a number of common features:
 - Teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn.
 - Well-timed questions involve the whole class and develop pupils' understanding.
 - Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to regularly review their learning against success criteria or 'steps to success'.
 - Activities place appropriate demands on all groups of pupils.
- Pupils benefit from teaching that is often practical, involves them in investigations and encourages them to work together in small groups. As a result, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully involved in the learning and enjoy taking part.
- The teaching of reading is particularly effective. Guided reading sessions happen regularly and increase pupils' ability to understand different types of writing as well as encouraging them to read more widely.
- Effective questioning by the teacher consolidates learning by reminding pupils of the work covered so far. For example, pupils in Year 3 had an excellent understanding of calculation methods following effective modelling of the process by the teacher, based on a review of their learning so far. The use of 'working wall' displays in the classrooms alerts pupils to new learning and helps to reinforce their understanding.
- Teaching is highly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils in Year 3 showed an impressive understanding of issues of discrimination and racism when looking at the experience of Rosa Parks in their work relating to Black History. Effective role-playing built on the pupils' previous learning and enabled them to demonstrate good use of speaking and listening skills and empathy as a preparation for writing.

- Marking and feedback contribute effectively to pupils' learning. When most effective, they give pupils a clear idea of how successful they are and what they need to do to improve and provide opportunities to demonstrate the acquisition of new skills. This is better developed in English and mathematics lessons and books than in other subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- 'I like the school now because there are new peer mediators to help other children.' This comment from one pupil highlights the positive changes made since the arrival of the headteacher which have contributed towards this being a school where everyone cares for each other.
- Pupils quickly develop excellent learning habits so that no time is wasted in lessons. They have very positive attitudes towards learning and show enthusiasm and a high degree of concentration when learning.
- Pupils say they feel safe and the informal arrangements with the local infant school work very well, and allow the children to mix appropriately. Pupils are sensitive to issues of bullying, and Year 6 peer mediators provide visible support at playtimes and lunchtimes in helping to resolve conflicts. Play leaders support the infants to enable a better transition across the two schools.
- Part of the pupil premium funding has been spent on a specialist counselling service. This provides expert support for pupils who find themselves in troubled circumstances. As a result, incidents of inappropriate behaviour are low and pupils are quickly reintegrated into class.
- The school has successfully reduced the number of pupils regularly absent, and attendance is above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's vision and determination have ensured that rapid improvements have been made since her appointment in September 2011. Staffing changes at all leadership levels over the last year have strengthened the leadership. The ambitions for further development provide a strong impetus for continuous improvement.
- Part of this transformation of the school has been the construction of a Year 6 teaching block, a refurbished computer suite, administration area and library, and the outdoor learning area in the form of an amphitheatre, which is near to completion. Pupils spoke highly of these changes, which contribute enormously to a safe and inspiring learning environment.
- The headteacher has introduced robust systems to evaluate and support staff performance, which have resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching, both by teachers and other adults. The careful analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses, in partnership with the local authority, has helped to strengthen the new leadership team.
- Over a short period of time, the headteacher and staff have established a harmonious and cohesive community built around shared values and ambitions. This was illustrated by the harvest assembly which brought together pupils, parents and staff from different cultures and religions, and helped the school community to celebrate and contribute to the local community.
- New teachers speak very positively about the support and opportunities provided by the school. 'As part of the Mount Stewart team, I feel proud, valued and privileged to have this opportunity to make a difference to the learning and development of children for the future.' This comment from one teacher reflects the views of the whole staff team.
- Topics and themes introduced as part of the curriculum are designed to meet the needs of the pupils, so that local, national and global perspectives are always considered. As such, the school does everything possible to help pupils grow into responsible citizens. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education and, in this highly ambitious school, many pupils are prepared effectively for transition to different types of secondary education, including

selective schools.

■ Parents who responded to Parent View and the school's own surveys are very happy with the school and fully support its ambitions.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- is effective, as governors provide good support in improving the communications with parents and offer challenge through their contribution to the school's self-evaluation
 - ensures that the school meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding
 - ensures that financial resources are used well; for example, the Year 6 teaching block has helped to transform pupils' learning experience and the introduction of interactive whiteboards in each classroom has broadened teachers' skills.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101500
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	402853

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 of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Graves
Headteacher	Bindu Rai
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2008
Telephone number	020 89071977
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