

John Stainer Community Primary School

St Asaph Road, Brockley, London SE4 2DY

Inspection dates 21–22 November 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 school has improved significantly over time. This has come about largely through the skilful leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by a talented staff and highly capable governing body. They share an ambitious vision for continuous improvement, and the result of their work is a harmonious school community which benefits from strong parental relationships.
- Leaders have ensured that teaching is outstanding and results in rapid and sustained progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment in reading is above average in both Year 2 and Year 6, and, by the time they reach Year 6, pupils do better than their peers nationally in English and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils make better than expected progress, including disabled pupils, pupils with special educational needs, and those who benefit from additional funding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They show a great deal of respect and care for each other, and their attendance is high.
- Pupils benefit from a rich and stimulating learning experience which draws extensively on visits to places of cultural interest. These experiences contribute effectively to the mature and sensitive spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- The praise that parents express about the school and the leadership is unreservedly positive, and is based on the knowledge that everything is done in the best interests of their children. As one said, 'I could not ask for a better school for my children.'

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 18 lessons or part lessons taught by 12 teachers.
- Joint lesson observations were conducted with senior leaders, and short visits were made to observe how well pupils were learning. In addition, inspectors examined the work in pupils' books with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan, external evaluations of the school, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records relating to behaviour and attendance, 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, through the school's own surveys and from the 12 responses to the on-line Parent View survey. They also considered comments from 25 staff.

Inspection team

Brian Netto, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jill Thewlis	Additional Inspector
Michael Jude	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Many of these pupils speak English as an additional language. The largest minority ethnic groups are of Black African and Black Caribbean heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average, whilst the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is around average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The number of pupils who join and leave the school at other than the usual times is well above average.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Since the last inspection, the school has expanded to take on two additional classes. There have been many changes in staff, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate at which pupils gain and develop skills in areas other than literacy and numeracy by:
 - ensuring that work is always matched to the abilities of all pupils
 - increasing the focus on investigation and practical problem-solving so that pupils have more opportunities to apply these skills in different ways.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those typical for their age. Progress is good because skilled leadership ensures effective teamwork across the three classes so that activities are well planned to meet the individual needs of the children. Progress across Key Stage 1 has improved in all areas, so that by the end of Year 2, reading is above the national average.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make outstanding progress in English and mathematics, and by Year 6, standards are above national averages.
- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress. This includes pupils supported through additional funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils from Black Caribbean and Black African heritage. This is because much of the teaching provides fresh challenges appropriate to the pupils' varying abilities, teaching is stimulating, and careful tracking of how well pupils are doing means no-one is left behind. This demonstrates the school's firm commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity.
- The teaching of reading is highly effective. Children make good use of letters and sounds to help decode words, and consequently they enjoy reading, and take every opportunity to read widely across different topics.
- Pupils apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across different topics and themes. However, their acquisition of skills needed in other subjects is less well developed. As a consequence, progress in these subjects is occasionally less rapid than in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is never less than consistently good, with much that is outstanding. The best teaching is characterised by high expectations, excellent modelling of language, and effective questioning which builds confidence in pupils. Well-timed questions and effective explanations by all adults ensure that all the pupils understand what they need to do.
- Children in Reception made outstanding progress in their letters and sounds as a result of effective modelling by the teacher, use of visual cues, and increasing levels of demand.
- Pupils are provided with a wide range of strategies to help them decode words and, as a result, the teaching of reading is very effective. Pupils read widely, are given many opportunities to read and respond to a wide range of texts. They say they read regularly with their parents.
- Pupils at risk of underperforming are taught well, as teachers plan to meet a wide range of needs, and other adults are used well to support small groups and individuals. Pupils funded through the pupil premium benefit from opportunities to learn with their peers in different contexts, and from interesting activities which engage their interests.
- Year 5 pupils used creative thinking to excel in their understanding of a story and, by thinking about different eyewitness accounts, were well prepared to dramatise the story based around quotes and dialogue. The outstanding teaching enabled pupils to expand their descriptive language, as ideas were shared in pairs and with the whole class.
- Year 3 pupils made outstanding progress in a lesson when they used calendars to learn about ideas of time. The effective and skilful questioning by staff helped to deepen the learning for pupils of all abilities.
- In Year 6, the pupils' progress was also outstanding when they created mnemonics to help them in spelling tricky words correctly. Regular checks on the learning by the teacher with expertly timed additional learning points enabled the teacher to challenge misconceptions and to

maintain a brisk pace.

- Teaching is most effective in English and mathematics and in topics where these skills are taught. It is less effective when other subject-specific skills are taught because on occasions, work is not planned precisely enough to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.
- Marking and feedback from teachers are consistently good across the school, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers and other adults provide specific and detailed guidance on how well pupils are doing, and what they need to achieve even better. The assessment of pupils' skills in other subjects is less well developed.
- Teaching is highly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Best use is made of a wealth of resources, including those found in the local and wider environment, and this makes learning exciting, fun and memorable. As one pupil said, 'I think John Stainer is awesome because there are fantastic trips.'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils behave with the utmost respect and courtesy to all visitors, who are made to feel very welcome to the school. Their behaviour in lessons is characterised by enthusiasm and willingness to 'have a go'. They have very strong attitudes towards learning, and respond well to inspiring teaching.
- Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for by staff, and show a good understanding about how they can keep themselves safe. Parents agree with this view.
- Pupils say that any incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively by the school. They show an exceptional understanding of different forms of bullying, and have been well prepared to deal with safe practices in using electronic media such as chat sites on computers and mobile phones. Pupils responded particularly well to the theme for the week that it is 'cool to be kind' by sharing with each other their random acts of kindness. This behaviour is also typical, as they show great care and consideration for each other.
- The school has been extremely effective in ensuring that the behaviour of a small minority of pupils has improved considerably over time. This comes from the fact that all pupils are known well by all staff, and, as one parent said, they treat the children like 'little adults', and pupils respond to this treatment in very mature ways.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs demonstrate the care and attention given to the needs of children and their families. They provide safe and fun environments to begin and end the school day.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The exceptional headteacher has led the school from special measures to outstanding in a short period of time, through inspirational leadership. This has come as a result of building strong teams of staff who are all committed to ensuring the best for each pupil. In spite of many changes in staff since the last inspection, there have been improvements in all areas.
- Leadership across the school is particularly strong. All leaders are models of high professional standards; they make effective use of data on how the pupils are doing to determine priorities, and have a relentless focus on the drive for improvement. Leadership is shared amongst the staff, including those who work in the school office.
- The school's self-evaluation is robust, as all staff contribute to collecting evidence about how well the pupils are doing. This informs the setting of priorities, and staff performance is measured against specific objectives which are based on these. Staff are suitably rewarded where these objectives have been exceeded.

- The topics and themes make full use of the local and wider environment to engage pupils. The planned activities, such as the regular visits to museums and galleries, and the Year 6 residential trip, provide memorable experiences which enliven the learning. A good example of this was the theatre company workshop which involved the whole school in an interactive performance of Pinocchio. Pupils and staff were fully engaged throughout the session, and showed immense concentration and enjoyment. These exceptional learning opportunities help to make an outstanding contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - The school's strong relationships with parents and the commitment to supporting families whose circumstances make them vulnerable have helped to improve attendance, which is well above the national average. Specialist advice from the family support worker ensures that their needs are met.
 - Many parents took the opportunity to write to the inspectors, and they were unanimous in their praise for the leaders and staff, as the following comments illustrate: 'The engagement and welfare of the children in their growing and expanding minds seems to be always foremost in the thoughts and efforts of the staff;' 'Both the teaching staff and support staff are of a high calibre;' 'John Stainer School is at the heart of our family life and our community.' Evidence from the inspection agreed with these views.
 - The local authority provides an appropriate level of support, and draws on the many excellent leadership qualities of the staff, including the headteacher, to mentor local school leadership teams.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is highly effective as members of the governing body are closely involved in strategic decisions, such as the consultation on the recent and projected expansion of the school, the appointment of the deputy headteacher, the incentivising of staff performance, and how successful the school has been in eradicating inadequate teacher performance. Governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher, so have a good understanding of how additional funds, particularly for pupil premium, have helped to accelerate the progress of pupils, and how consistently outstanding teaching is leading to rapid gains in learning for all groups of pupils. They are familiar with how well the pupils' progress compares with the national picture. All governors have received training on preparing for inspections, and those with specific responsibilities have up-to-date training in financial management and safeguarding. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met, including those relating to safeguarding.
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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	100689
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	402829

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harriet Quiney
Headteacher	Sue Harte
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
Telephone number	020 76390482
Fax number	020 77328875
Email address	headteacher@johnstainer.lewisham.sch.uk

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