

Stanford Primary School

Chilmark Road, Norbury, London SW16 5HB

Inspection dates

14–15 July 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- This is an improving school, but from Years 1 to 6, most pupils still do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in science, geography and history is not as high as that seen in English, mathematics, French and computing.
- Leaders' judgements about how well the school is improving are too generous because their checks do not focus strongly enough upon whether pupils are making enough progress.
- Although teachers are ambitious when deciding what to teach, pupils too often do not understand what is expected of them. As a result, they do not use what they know already to help them produce their best work.
- Teachers provide regular feedback but this is not always understood by pupils who, as a result, are uncertain about how to make their work better.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to speak freely about what they know and can do already and what they find difficult. Teachers therefore are not able to support and challenge pupils precisely enough.
- Guidance from senior and middle leaders about good and better learning is not understood or used equally well by teachers across the school.
- Governors have not rigorously held senior leaders to account for the impact of their work. As a result, improvements in the school have been slow.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the early years. Teachers help children make good use of the many opportunities to learn.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified early and they are supported well.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education helps to create a welcoming and calm school. Pupils are interested in learning about others' lives in the world around them.
- School leaders have helped teachers raise their ambition and expectations for how well pupils can achieve.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good or better progress by:
 - increasing rates of progress in science, geography and history to match the progress seen in the best subjects
 - making clear what is expected from pupils so that they can combine earlier and new learning to help them produce their best work
 - checking that when teachers give feedback to pupils, the advice is clear and precise enough to help pupils improve their work
 - ensuring that pupils share more freely what they know and can do already, and what they find difficult or unclear, so that teachers' support and challenge has greater impact on learning.

- Improve leadership and management so that all pupils learn well by:
 - making sure that all staff, particularly middle leaders, demonstrate their understanding of, and deliver, the key features of good and better learning equally well in their work
 - checking the impact on learning more clearly and thoroughly when judging how well their actions are improving the school
 - ensuring that governors hold senior and middle leaders more accountable for the impact of their work by receiving convincing evidence to show that the improvements are more rapid and firmly established throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has improved since the previous inspection but the improvements have been slow. The headteacher, supported by her senior leaders, has challenged weaker teaching and held middle leaders more accountable for their impact on pupils' learning and development. Provision in the early years has continued to gradually improve. Pupils now in Years 1 and 2 are benefiting from this good preparation and are learning better. Differences in achievement between different groups of pupils are diminishing and the most able pupils are better catered for. Still, not enough pupils make good progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Professional development provided within the school, by the local authority and from a local outstanding school, the Bishop Gilpin Church of England Primary School, has helped senior leaders raise ambition and expectations from all staff for all pupils. These partnerships have helped senior leaders develop clearer responsibilities, raise expectations of what pupils can achieve and translate that into learning plans. This has still to fully have an impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Leaders carry out regular checks on how well teaching is improving learning. Sensibly, leaders check a wide range of pupil information. Inspectors agree that there has been improvement, but this has been slower than the school believes because leaders' judgements about the impacts of their actions are not based clearly enough on how well different groups of pupils have made progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils say that teachers make learning interesting through trips, visitors and activity weeks. Plans for the order of teaching and what should be included are sometimes not delivered skilfully enough to gain enough impact on learning. This is particularly the case in certain subjects, such as science, geography and history. The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities, from sports and study clubs to opportunities to learn music and perform in front of audiences. Pupils say they enjoy these opportunities to play and learn together.
- The school ensures that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils to learn through its high expectations and support for teachers. Parents notice that sometimes frequent staffing changes have affected pupils' learning. The school has improved its efforts to help parents understand how the school is improving and also the challenges it faces.
- Funding that the school receives to provide more sporting opportunities for pupils has been used to widen the range of sports available and increase participation. More pupils now enjoy sport and the school is determined to help more pupils excel at sports which interest them.
- The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) programme provides opportunities for thoughtful discussion about 'successes in our lives and the challenges facing us'. Pupils engage well with this part of the curriculum. They learn that we can make our voices heard at home, school and in wider society; and that everybody has a right to be heard and to live in harmony with others.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is evident through the school expectations for each other and through learning about the lives of people who follow different faiths or live in different parts of this country and the world. The school is a friendly, welcoming, calm and harmonious community.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Although the review of governance recommended by the previous inspection has had limited impact, the governing body has since improved its structure. As a result, there have been changes in membership to strengthen the skills and expertise that governors bring to their work.
 - During these changes the governors have held school leaders accountable for their work but improvements in the school have been slow. This is because governors have failed to challenge the senior and middle leaders' evidence strongly enough about why the school is not improving faster.
 - Governors have helped to reduce the difference in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school by ensuring that the pupil premium funding is used to provide good-quality support. There are now stronger links between performance management of staff and how well the school is performing.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school carries out additional checks to make sure that all staff and visitors understand their responsibilities, and that they know to how to ask for, or provide, help. Parents, pupils and staff agree that pupils are safe in this school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Although teachers are ambitious in their intentions, pupils are too often unclear about exactly what is expected of them in lessons. Pupils are uncertain about what earlier learning they need to use, how to approach the tasks set and the level of detail expected from them to be successful. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to tell teachers what they know already or find difficult and to ask questions. As a result there is too much variability in how well different pupils learn. There is too much variability within pupils' work and not enough good progress overall.
- The school has recently established a tracking system which helps them better identify the differences in pupils' learning and their next steps in learning. Teachers use this knowledge to help plan their lessons. The impact of this is not bringing about enough good progress. This is because not all teachers identify the differences in pupils' performance well and sometimes when teachers indicate that work has been completed successfully they are being too generous.
- Teachers give regular feedback to pupils and this has contributed to building pupils' confidence in their abilities. The impact of this feedback is not as great as it could be because many pupils are unclear about how to use the feedback to improve their work.
- The most able pupils are now challenged further in lessons. For example, they use computer programming language to devise simple games. The school recognises that there is continued effort required here to make sure that the weaknesses in teaching mentioned above do not reduce the impact on the progress that the most able pupils make.
- Pupils who are at risk of falling behind, such as pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Their needs are identified early and timely support is provided by a team of adults who focus on pupils' learning gains in addition to their well-being. The few pupils who have complex needs are equally well supported. Pupils who speak English as an additional language keep up with their peers in the school because they engage equally well with learning. Disadvantaged pupils also benefit from higher expectations for all. Differences between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school are much reduced since the previous inspection.
- Adults in the early years help children use the resources available to good effect. They carefully watch and listen to the children so that they can help them learn well. Children are usually engrossed by the opportunities they have to enjoy playing and learning. They learn to use sounds of letters to recognise words and express themselves carefully when they speak, read and write. Inspection evidence agrees with the vast majority of parents who recognise the strengths of teaching for these children.
- Inspectors saw evidence of good learning when pupils discussed ideas thoughtfully, understood clearly what they needed to try to understand and gave their own views with confidence, for example when analysing a photograph in a PSHE lesson. As a result, they could speak at length to explain their understanding of challenging ideas, and write at length to express their ideas logically, from different perspectives. Pupils' writing included use of rich vocabulary and the correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Due to the weaknesses in teaching, pupils do not develop a strong enough sense of responsibility to let their teachers know if they fully understand sufficiently well, nor are they clear about whether their work is the best they can produce. Pupils are also not usually encouraged to ask questions which interest them so that they can deepen their understanding.
- Most pupils gain confidence and widen their understanding of the world from the experiences they have at school.
- When they are helped to understand important details within challenging topics, sometimes about sensitive subjects such as marriage and relationships, pupils respond well with their own thoughtful ideas and opinions.
- Pupils say that they are safe in school and most parents agree. Incidents of disruptive behaviour including bullying or prejudice-based behaviours are minimal.
- Child protection is managed well. The school responds promptly and provides clear information about what is being done to help families. The pastoral leader provides open access for pupils to come and share concerns. Quite a number use this support and find the resulting advice and support useful. This

offer is also used by parents when they need advice about parenting or managing aspects of their family life.

- Most pupils increasingly demonstrate the 'five keys to success' in school. These are: confidence, persistence, resilience, organisation and getting along.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In many lessons, a considerable number of pupils do not seek clarification about what they are expected to learn if they are uncertain. Their progress slows when they are not actively involved enough in ensuring that they learn well.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well, want to learn and recognise that they need to respect the rights of other pupils to learn safely and happily in school. Exclusions are rare.
- Attendance is now broadly in line with other schools nationally. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has risen over the past year to higher than the average levels seen nationally. The school has increased its focus upon helping these pupils and their parents to remove obstacles to attending school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Published data for the school indicates that progress in reading, writing and mathematics has been variable over time, particularly in Years 1 to 6, with writing being the weakest area. Sustained improvement in the early years is now also helping raise standards in Years 1 and 2. For example, writing is not a weakness in these year groups. Progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is still variable across subjects and year groups due to weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Additionally, the differences in what pupils should already know and understand, although reducing, are still slowing rates of progress. Most pupils still do not make good enough progress from their starting points. Progress in some subjects is slower than that seen in English and mathematics, particularly in science, geography and history.
- The school library provides pupils with an interesting choice of suitable books which they use well to practise their skills and broaden their knowledge. Although pupils read with increasing fluency and confidence, they do not have enough opportunity to read carefully and for different purposes across all of their learning. For example, opportunities to follow written instructions in science are limited. In Years 1 to 6, some of the activities used to teach reading are not helping to secure and extend reading skills. This contributes to the overall slow progress.
- Basic reading skills are increasingly taught well. In the 2015 and 2016 phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) screening checks, the proportion of pupils reaching national expectations was in line with that seen nationally. Most pupils enjoy reading.
- Pupils' books show that they work carefully when carrying out mathematics activities. There is a good balance of calculations, deeper thinking and applying understanding to simple problems. The school is increasing its focus upon more complex problems, but this work is at an early stage. As with reading, the proportions of pupils making good progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is not high enough because of variability in the quality of teaching and remaining differences in learning.
- The progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. They keep up with their peers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also mainly keep up, though those at an early stage of English language skills make slower progress. Differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school are closing. The most able pupils are on track to reach higher levels of attainment this year, but they are still hindered by the variability in the quality of teaching.

Early years provision

is good

- Children in the early years make good progress. They join the Nursery at skill and development levels below those typical for their age. This is particularly true for speaking. By the end of Reception the proportion of children making good progress is in line with the average seen nationally. Children make good progress in academic skills as well as personal and social development. Differences in achievement between boys and girls in previous years have closed and most children are ready for the challenge of learning in Year 1.
- The early years provides a rich environment with lots of opportunities to learn and play. Children use the resources well. As they learn, they gain confidence, concentrate well and speak freely to share their ideas

with adults and other children. Children develop a sense of responsibility by, for example, taking turns and helping to tidy learning areas.

- Most children read and write basic sentences clearly by the end of the Reception Year. Purposeful activities such as producing invitations to a party and finding out about how we stay healthy by reading information in books helps them persist with activities so that they gain more.
- The leader of the early years uses information about how well the children are learning to make sure that teachers plan, teach and organise activities equally well. The adults understand how young children learn well and provide them with opportunities to practise what they are learning so that they are confident with new skills and understanding. Parents are kept well informed and say that their children learn and develop well.

School details

Unique reference number	102660
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10011890

This inspection 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	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Winters
Headteacher	Keran Currie
Telephone number	020 8763 3892
Website	www.stanford.merton.sch.uk
Email address	stanfordprimaryschool@stanford.merton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 May 2014

Information about this school

- Stanford Primary School is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of girls and boys varies slightly across year groups. There are more girls than boys in the current Year 4. There is a lower proportion of girls in Year 2.
- Most pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than typically seen nationally. A significant proportion of pupils are of Caribbean heritage and a slightly smaller number are of African or Pakistani or Other White heritage. Others are from a variety of backgrounds.
- There is a higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requiring support and an average proportion of pupils requiring a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is above average. (Pupil premium funding is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, or children who are looked after.)
- Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in staffing. There have also been changes in membership within the governing body.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A local outstanding primary school, the Bishop Gilpin Church of England Primary School, has provided support for Stanford Primary School.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a wide range of lessons and subjects, including some observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, shorter visits to lessons took place through tours of the school with senior leaders.
- During visits to lessons, the inspection team spoke with pupils and looked at their books to find out more about how well they are learning.
- Additional examples of pupils' work were examined for every year group to gather further evidence about how well pupils had been learning before the inspection.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. Formal meetings were held with a group of pupils to seek their views of the school. Further discussions were held with pupils during their breaktime.
- Additional meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, a group of parents who have recently formed a parent/teacher association, governors and local authority representatives.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school more broadly and looked at documentation. This included policies and improvement plans relating to leaders' checks on how well the school is improving, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, pupil achievement, curriculum, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The team took account of the 51 online Parent View questionnaires, the school's own parent and pupil surveys and gathered parents' views at the start and end of the day. No staff questionnaires were completed.

Inspection team

Mehar Brar, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Brinkley	Ofsted Inspector
Frances Hawkes	Ofsted Inspector

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