

Inspection of Stillness Infant School

Brockley Rise, London SE23 1NH

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning because 'teachers make it fun'. They describe staff as 'kind' and 'caring'. Pupils are safe and build healthy relationships. Leaders have high expectations and ensure that pupils achieve well.

Behaviour is good. Pupils' attitudes to their education are positive. They show commitment to learning and have high attendance levels. Some pupils become disengaged when the teaching does not meet their needs in the lesson.

Pupils understand what bullying is and say that they can approach any adult if they have any worries. Adults respond swiftly to concerns that pupils raise.

Pupils show a strong understanding of morals. This is underpinned by their thorough knowledge of the school's values, such as making the right choices. Educational visits are well planned for every year group. These support pupils' learning of the curriculum and themes in personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes.

Links with parents and carers are particularly strong. They are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They visit the school often and talk about their professions to support pupils' understanding of a range of career aspirations. These include an architect, virologist, actors and children's authors. The commitment of parents was reflected in the large number in attendance at the end-of-year performances that took place during the inspection.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders want the best for pupils. The curriculum is broad and rich. It has well-chosen experiences that enable pupils to make connections with what they have learned. However, the teaching does not always support the school's intentions for the curriculum. This is because staff do not routinely check what pupils know or understand. This means that they do not maximise the opportunities to revisit knowledge and deepen pupils' thinking or understanding. This is a feature across the school. Further development in subjects such as physical education, computing, and design and technology is under way.

Leaders have prioritised reading because they want to raise standards in pupils' knowledge of phonics. The school introduced a new phonics programme at the start of the school year. Staff comment positively on how this has affected the structure of lessons. Staff have received training to ensure that they teach the sounds with accuracy. Teachers use resources well to support their teaching. Pupils learn, rehearse and practise known and new sounds. Staff use assessments to decide which books match the sounds that the pupils can read. They use intervention sessions to help pupils to catch up with their peers in their knowledge of decoding words. Book corners are attractive. They expose pupils to a range of texts linked to different authors, subjects and themes.

Teachers plan and provide purposeful experiences for children in early years. Children explore learning in practical ways. They respond well to the open-ended approach that staff create towards investigating mathematical concepts. Some children show systematic thinking when creating numerical patterns or hanging washing on a clothesline. Staff present information clearly. However, they do not routinely model the language or vocabulary that they expect children to learn, use and achieve.

Leaders work with external agencies in identifying the needs of pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator supports staff in strengthening their understanding of meeting the needs of different pupils in lessons. Leaders also consider this when designing and adapting the curriculum.

Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite. They play well together. They speak clearly about how to be safe. Pupils enjoy learning and want to do their best. In some lessons, there are incidents of low-level disruptive behaviour, which includes pupils calling out, becoming disengaged or going off task. This is because some teachers do not alter the teaching to respond to what pupils say, or what they can or cannot do. This sometimes results in pupils not receiving the guidance they need to access the learning or the springboard to propel them deeper in their learning. Some low-level disruptions go unchallenged by staff.

Leaders place great emphasis on the highly consistent provision of personal development for all. They provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on themselves, their emotions and their feelings. Pupils have a thorough knowledge of the school's values. They can name these with confidence and give examples of how they show them in school. Leaders have fostered a 'have a go' culture, where pupils understand that 'making mistakes is an opportunity for learning'. Pupils pursue their interests and talents through a wide range of well-planned outings, clubs and performances.

Governors are highly skilled and knowledgeable. They reflect on their effectiveness in fulfilling their statutory duties and the school's vision. Leaders invest in the professional development of the staff. They work closely with the local authority school improvement adviser in developing the expertise of the subject leaders. This focus is ongoing. Staff celebrate how leaders 'go the extra mile' in caring for them, pupils and families. Leaders consider staff workload and make adjustments to ensure that staff have a healthy work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make staff well aware of the local risks to pupils. Staff teach these factors in age-appropriate ways through the PSHE programme and assemblies. There is a culture where staff understand that safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility'. They

follow clear and robust procedures in reporting and managing safeguarding concerns.

Pupils feel safe in school and can clearly explain how they resolve any issues with their peers. Pupils explain with confidence how to keep healthy and safe when online.

Leaders take pride in the help they offer their pupils, staff and families. Leaders partner with local businesses and external agencies in supplying early help for families in need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teaching does not always support the delivery of the school's intentions for the curriculum. This is because staff do not routinely check what pupils know or understand through their use of questioning or interactions with them. Opportunities to revisit pupils' knowledge or to deepen their thinking or understanding are not captured or maximised in lessons. Leaders should train subject leaders further in understanding what is expected of them. They must continue to support staff in securing the consistent and high-quality implementation of the full curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100705
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10228733
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	285
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of the governing body	Heidi Watson and Christopher Barber (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Annie Grimes
Website	www.stillness-inf.lewisham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Stillness Infant School is a large infant school.
- There are two chairs of the governing body, who currently share the role. They took up their posts in 2016.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the co-chairs and members of the governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders, a range of staff and a local authority representative.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a

sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors scrutinised a range of curriculum plans in other subjects, including history, geography, computing and mathematics. They also looked at the school strategic improvement plan and other documentation.
- The inspectors considered information provided about safeguarding arrangements. The inspectors scrutinised safeguarding records and the single central record. They reviewed procedures and processes by talking to leaders and staff, and through discussions with pupils and parents.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents and staff through Ofsted's online surveys, including 142 free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View, and 33 responses from members of staff.
- The inspectors visited the breakfast club operated by the school.

Inspection team

Lascelles Haughton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ben Carter	Ofsted Inspector
Lando Du Plooy	Ofsted Inspector

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