



Staple Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109018
LEA South Gloucestershire
Inspection number 278105
Inspection dates 22 November 2005 to 23 November 2005
Reporting inspector Jill Arnold HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Page Road
School category	Community		Staple Hill
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Bristol BS16 4NE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01454 867240
Number on roll	473	Fax number	01454 867 241
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Sam Walpole
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Chaplin

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Staple Hill is a larger than average primary school situated in a socially and economically deprived area of Bristol. A fifth of the nursery places are reserved for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. When pupils start in the Reception classes, their attainment is generally below average, although each new group reflects a wide spread of ability. Pupils are mainly of White British origin but nearly 15 per cent come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Eight per cent of pupils do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to improving pupils' achievement and raising standards in English and mathematics.

Staple Hill School is a welcoming and caring community where pupils' personal development is given a high priority. Pupils enjoy coming to school and parents are supportive. However, standards are not good enough and many pupils are not achieving as well as they could. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and often good, but not consistently so. The majority of pupils behave well and are keen to learn but, occasionally, weaknesses in the teaching lead to them losing interest. Although the quality of educational provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, the standards attained by children are below average.

The new headteacher provides good leadership and she is supported by an enthusiastic team and a committed governing body. The school has satisfactorily addressed all but one of the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection and is working hard to improve the achievement of all pupils. The leadership team has already made some significant improvements in a very short time. The school has a sound basis for further development. However, it is too early for initiatives to have had much influence on standards.

The school views its overall effectiveness as satisfactory but, because pupils' academic achievement is so low in comparison to that of pupils in similar schools, inspectors judge its overall effectiveness to be inadequate. Consequently, the school is failing to provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve the quality of teaching, so that it is consistently good in all areas of the school
- ensure that all teachers are using assessment effectively, to track pupils' progress and to set appropriately challenging targets for them to achieve
- provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve the quality of their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils' achievement and standards are inadequate.

When children enter the Nursery their attainment is below the standards expected for their age. Although they make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, many children do not achieve the Early Learning Goals, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

National test results in 2005 were lower than in the previous two years and the school failed to meet its published targets. The standards attained by Year 2 pupils remained below the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. The English and mathematics results for Year 6 were below national averages and significantly lower than those in similar schools.

The school has focused its attention on the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, who make satisfactory progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. It has not given sufficient attention to the needs of higher attaining pupils, who are not achieving as well as they could.

The school knows that pupils' achievement is inadequate and it is working hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning. During the inspection, pupils often made good progress in individual lessons, but the standards of work seen during the inspection were lower than average. However, the school's careful analysis of progress suggests that the results of the 2006 national tests for Year 6 are likely to show an improvement on this year's results.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good. They feel safe in school and know that incidents of bullying or harassment are dealt with firmly.

Pupils feel able to make a positive contribution to the community because their views are sought and they are listened to. They respond confidently in lessons in the knowledge that their opinions will be valued. They have generated good ideas for improving the school and for charitable fund-raising, through the school council. Pupils develop responsibility through activities such as taking charge of resources. Their social skills are developed through teamwork, sharing and making presentations.

The school has a Healthy School Award and pupils understand the benefits of health and lifestyle choices. They drink water regularly and many choose healthy lunch options. Many pupils enjoy physical education and benefit from the extra-curricular sporting activities provided. Although attendance had previously declined slightly over a three-year period, it is now satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and there are satisfactory procedures for assessing the needs of individuals. Relationships are particularly good in the Nursery where carefully planned activities ensure that children's personal, social and emotional skills are developed well. In the

Reception classes, however, too much time is spent each day on one specific area of learning.

Much of the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. In the better lessons, pupils were excited by learning and therefore they behaved well and made good progress. Teachers demonstrated good knowledge of the subject and provided explicit teaching of key skills. Careful lesson planning ensured that pupils' interests and academic needs were well catered for, and pupils were actively involved.

In less effective lessons, the pace was too slow and pupils lost interest when the activities were not inspiring or challenging. There were insufficient opportunities for pupils to participate or to discuss their ideas. The lesson planning did not address the full range of learning needs within the class.

Relationships between adults and pupils are generally good and praise is used well to boost pupils' self-esteem. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress as a result of the encouragement and guidance they receive. However, assessment and the use of comments and marking to provide feedback to pupils are not being used consistently in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum with a good range of additional activities.

Curricular provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although lesson planning for the Reception classes does not identify what each group of children is expected to achieve from each activity. The areas of learning are not adequately integrated, particularly communication, language and literacy development, and mathematical development.

A revised curriculum provides more opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding and enjoyment by making links between subjects and by increasing the use of information and communication technology. However, these opportunities are not yet being fully exploited.

There is a good range of additional activities for pupils at lunch time and after school including sports, music, drama, French and gardening. The curriculum is also enriched by visits to theatres and by artists coming into school. The residential trip by Year 6 pupils is enjoyed greatly and develops their academic, social and physical skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are satisfactory. Staff know their pupils well, care about them and quickly respond to their individual needs. The school undertakes thorough risk assessment. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are satisfactory.

The school works effectively with a number of outside agencies to benefit individual pupils. There is good provision for pupils who find learning or conforming difficult

and for those with physical disabilities. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive helpful support and their progress is monitored carefully. Teachers have recently had training in identifying and supporting pupils who are particularly gifted or talented but it is too early to assess the effects of this work on these pupils' achievement.

Although there are new improved systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting academic targets, these are not being applied consistently in all classes. Many pupils are unsure of how well they are doing or how they can make progress. They are not given enough guidance in class or through the marking of their work to enable them to reach higher standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Through its realistic self-evaluation, which takes account of the views of pupils, parents, staff and governors, the school has an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. There is a clear focus on raising standards and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being.

In a short space of time, the new headteacher has had a significant influence on the school. She is providing clear direction and is leading the drive for improvement with energy and determination. The quality of teaching has improved, with staff receiving constructive feedback. The school is calmer, with fewer incidents of disruptive behaviour. The newly introduced system for closely tracking pupils' progress is effectively highlighting where to focus additional learning support. The steps taken to improve attendance are having a positive effect so far this academic year. The teachers in the new leadership team have a clear view of what needs to be done to improve pupils' achievement and they are well supported by local authority advisory teachers in carrying out their action plans. The governing body is committed to helping the school to improve and it is beginning to develop a more critical approach to evaluation. It has several new members who are planning to undertake training to help them carry out their responsibilities. It is too early to expect a significant improvement in standards of attainment, but these rapid and positive developments show that the school has now established a secure foundation for improvement.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Staple Hill Primary School, Page Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS14 4NE

24 November 2005

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for welcoming us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and visiting your lessons.

We thought that you behaved well in lessons and around the school. It was good to see how well you get on with each other and with your teachers and other adults who work in your school. You and your parents told us that you like coming to school and especially enjoy art, physical education and the lunch time and after-school activities. We could see that you were learning best in the lessons that you found really interesting and which gave you lots of opportunities to take part.

Although you and your teachers work hard, we think that many of you are not achieving as well as you could. We have asked Mrs Chaplin and the teachers to make sure that all your lessons are as interesting as the best ones. We have also asked them to make sure you know how well you are doing and to give you plenty of advice on how to improve your work. We want you to do your very best, so try hard to follow their advice and ask if you are not sure. We are also a little worried that some of you are away from school too much. Try to make sure that you go to school every day so that you do not miss any lessons.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Jill Arnold

Her Majesty's Inspector