



Stebbing Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114888
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279466
Inspection dates 12 June 2006 to 13 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. George Knights LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Community		CM6 3SH
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01371 856260
Number on roll	85	Fax number	01371 856091
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Fiona Wilson
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Janet Matthews

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 12 June 2006 - 13 June 2006	Inspection number 279466
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Stebbing Primary is a smaller than average primary school serving the village of Stebbing and the surrounding area near Great Dunmow. Most pupils come from private housing, though a significant number live in local authority housing. The number eligible for free school meals is below average. At any one time up to 10% of pupils are from the travelling community. The number of pupils with identified learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average, as is the number with statements of special educational need. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and all pupils speak English as their home language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stebbing Primary is a good and improving school which provides its pupils with a good education. Children in the good Foundation Stage make a secure start to their schooling so that by the time they enter Year 1, they are confident learners who enjoy school life. Good teaching helps pupils achieve well, with teachers making sure that all pupils make good progress. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enrichment activities complement class lessons very well. Plans to enhance the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and to develop a more creative, skills based curriculum are being implemented. The school's systems for providing care, support and guidance are effective and, as a consequence, pupils' personal development is good. Behaviour is excellent. Inspection findings support the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The new headteacher and her colleagues are working very well together to build on the school's existing strengths. They have identified the main issues for improvement. They are supported by an outstanding governing body which fulfils all its responsibilities. There are suitable plans to extend the role of subject leaders, intended to further enhance the leadership and management of the school. Resources available are used well and the school gives good value for money. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and plans for further improvement are appropriate. The capacity for further improvement is very good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the curriculum by developing a more creative and skills based approach to subject planning. - Implement plans to enhance the provision of computers and other use of ICT in classrooms. - Develop the role of subject leaders in broadening the curriculum and extending strategies for evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well during their time at the school. They arrive in the Foundation Stage when they are four years old with broadly average attainments. They make steady progress during the Reception year and most are confidently working at average standards when they enter Year 1. A significant proportion is working at a higher level. Pupils make good progress during the next two years so that in national assessments at the end of Year 2, they reach above average standards. Results in national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2005 were broadly average, but pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving well and are on course to reach above average standards this year. The school met its appropriate targets last year and has set more challenging targets for this year. Teacher assessments indicate that these targets are likely to be achieved in English and exceeded in mathematics. Throughout the school, teachers pay careful attention to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. These pupils progress at similar rates to others. Very good attention is paid to supporting other groups, including those

from the traveller community. Hence these pupils gain fully from all that the school offers and make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy coming to school and form very good relationships with one another and with the adults who work with them. They work hard in lessons and in the many other activities that the school provides. Pupils' behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is outstanding. Attendance is average and has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Pupils' social development is very good. Pupils work very well together and take responsibility for one another, for instance in activities such as the play leader scheme. The contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development, both through assemblies and lessons, is good. Much has been done since the previous inspection to improve pupils' awareness of the fact that they are growing up in a diverse cultural and faith society. Hence the school now contributes well to pupils' cultural development. Pupils know about important risks, feel safe in school and know that there is always an adult to help them when they need support. They are responding well to the encouragement to adopt healthy lifestyles by, for instance, taking plenty of exercise and eating healthy foods. The contribution that pupils make to the community is good. Through fund raising and participating in a range of local events, pupils gain insights into how they can help to enhance the lives of others. The development of pupils' language, mathematics and computer skills, together with their participation in activities such as the Christmas Market, makes a good contribution to pupils' preparation for adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, enabling pupils to progress well. Teachers carefully identify pupils' individual needs and use this knowledge in matching activities and tasks to their different ages and abilities. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure that all pupils, including those from the traveller community, progress at similar rates. Lesson activities are varied, with an effective mix of individual, pair and group work. Good attention is paid to ensuring that pupils take part in investigative and experimental work. Pupils' learning is supported adequately by the use of a range of ICT, which is an area identified for further improvement. In all lessons, pupils are clear about what it is they should learn and they are becoming increasingly skilled in assessing for themselves how well they are doing. In turn, this is helping them to take responsibility for their work and to set themselves goals to achieve. The marking of pupils' work is thorough, with helpful comments for pupils on how they can improve. These written comments are backed up by good discussions in which teachers guide pupils and challenge them to do better. Homework helps reinforce

learning undertaken in class but improving this aspect of teachers' work is an identified priority in the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is enriched by a wide range of activities that take place outside lessons. Statutory requirements are met, with pupils learning a broad range of subjects and developing their social skills very well. In all aspects of the curriculum, care is taken to involve and engage pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds. An effective programme for pupils in the Foundation Stage is linked to nationally agreed goals and provides a valuable grounding for children's later work. Children benefit both socially and academically from working alongside Year 1 pupils. Enrichment afternoons provide a very good extension to other work, with the effective use of a range of providers from the community to extend the scope of activities provided. The school has identified as a priority the need to improve the curriculum by focusing more on the creative aspects of subjects and to extend and enhance the range of skills that pupils develop, such as in writing and science. It is also aware that the integration of new technologies systematically into classrooms will further build on the good work undertaken since the previous inspection to improve the use of ICT in pupils' learning. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the range of extra-curricular activities provided for them at lunchtime and after school. They also benefit from the many trips, visits and other activities organised to extend and develop learning in class. These activities help build up pupils' confidence and self esteem. They also support the development of healthy lifestyles as well as pupils' understanding and experience of the wider world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care is good. Teachers know their pupils and their families well and parents are confident that their children are well cared for and that the school will deal effectively with any concerns that they may have. Steps are being taken to involve and engage parents more in the life and work of the school. Pupils contribute their views on aspects of school life through surveys and the work of class and school councils. Procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and well protected are securely in place. Good progress has been made to develop a system for checking and recording how well pupils are doing and for tracking their performance over time. This system is used to ensure that all pupils know what they should be achieving. From this summer, the school intends to provide a much clearer picture for parents about the progress their children are making. The tracking of individual pupils is already being used by teachers to plan work more effectively so that all pupils, including the most able and those with learning disabilities or difficulties, make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are enabling the school to improve. The newly appointed headteacher, together with her deputy, is leading the school forward very effectively and there are exciting plans for further development. The school is already living out its vision that pupils will leave the school as confident and caring young people. Its aims are clear and well articulated and these form the basis of an effective plan to guide further improvements. Governors carry out all aspects of their responsibilities very effectively indeed. They have played a crucial role in supporting and guiding the school during a period when there was no permanent headteacher. They ensured that progress was maintained in all aspects of school life and particularly in the plans to extend the school's provision for the Foundation Stage. They are contributing fully to the further improvement of the school and involve, for example, parents and the local authority effectively in the process. The evaluation by the school of how well it is doing is detailed and accurate. Effective systems for reviewing all aspects of what is going on are being implemented and outcomes are being used to produce a detailed plan for further improvement. Currently most evaluative activity is undertaken by senior staff but this is being extended to include all teachers in the school. This move is part of the plan to extend and enhance the management role of subject leaders. The school runs very smoothly on a day to day basis, with staff and pupils following well known routines. The deployment of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of pupils is good and plans for the future are closely matched to the identified strengths of staff and needs of pupils. The management of resources is good. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and the capacity for further improvement is very good.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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

I should like to thank you all for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I really enjoyed coming to your lessons, joining you in assembly and watching you play together. Thank you for talking to me about your work and helping me to find my way around the school. You clearly enjoy your time in school and you know that your teachers and their assistants will help you to learn and to get along well together. Your behaviour, both in lessons and around the school is excellent. I was pleased to see how well you get along with one another and I noted how you help one another, both in lessons and when you are playing. You work hard, know how well you are doing and you try to meet your targets. Your lessons are interesting, but your teachers have rightly decided that they can make them even more so by helping develop your skills further. They have also recognised that your good computer skills can be improved further by having more computers and other equipment in your classrooms. You obviously feel safe in school and this is because members of staff care for you and make sure that you get the support you need. The school keep good records of how well you are doing and they share this information with you to help you to improve. From this summer they are going to give more of this information to your parents so that they, too, will know how well you are doing. Your school is well run and the plans your teachers have for the future are very exciting. The new headteacher and the governors are making sure that all the other teachers play a full part in making the school even better. My very best wishes to you. I hope that you all do very well in the future.