



# Bedlington Steadlane First School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 122181  
**LEA** Northumberland  
**Inspection number** 281179  
**Inspection dates** 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Linda Buller

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

<b>Type of school</b>	First	<b>School address</b>	The Oval
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bedlington
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 9		Northumberland, NE22 5JS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01670 823171
<b>Number on roll</b>	145	<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Angela Storey
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Patricia R Swinhoe

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 281179
----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Bedlington Steadlane First School is set in the heart of its community to the east of Bedlington town centre. The school caters for boys and girls aged 3-9 in 6 classes including a part-time nursery. All pupils are come from an area which is ranked in the bottom 27 per cent in terms of area deprivation, and is characterised by high levels of unemployment. The percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The school is part of the South East Northumberland Excellence Cluster which aims to contribute to the regeneration of the area. No pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The children's overall attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average for their age. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is below the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be a good school and inspectors agree. Pupils from nursery to Year 4 are cared for well, work hard and enjoy school. Most parents like the school and consider that it does the best for their children. Standards are average and this represents good achievement and progress for most pupils from their very low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery, although boys do not do as well as girls. The provision in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) is good and helps children to make a good start in their learning. Teaching is good, though in science, the more able pupils are not always challenged enough. The school is a calm, caring community reflecting the teachers' high expectations for good behaviour and hard work.

The head teacher, senior managers and governors provide good leadership and management. Their accurate self-evaluation means that they have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, although these are not always reflected in the school's key priorities for improvement or clear enough focus for the monitoring of teaching and learning. Resources are used well and the school provides good value for money. There has been a good response to the issues raised at the last inspection resulting in rising standards, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that boys achieve as well as girls.
- Ensure that the work set in science lessons challenges the more able pupils to reach their potential.
- Ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning focuses specifically on what the school is doing to improve, and evaluate its impact on raising standards.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Overall, pupils achieve well. Children begin school with low standards, especially in language and mathematics. They make good progress through the nursery and reception classes because of good teaching although by the time they enter Year 1 they are still below average in most areas of learning. Pupils continue to make good progress and, in Year 2, standards are broadly average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, boys do not achieve as well as girls. Although the school has identified this difference in achievement through its self-evaluation, it has not yet fully succeeded in closing the gap.

The picture is similar in Year 4. Overall, pupils achieve average standards in English and science, although they are above average in mathematics. However, in Year 2 and Year 4, too few of the more able pupils reach the higher standards expected of them in science, because teachers do not consistently challenge these pupils enough. The school has done well to ensure that standards have remained consistently average

over recent years by setting itself challenging targets and, as a result, standards have risen in line with the national trend of improvement.

Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress throughout the school, because they are identified early and receive work that meets their individual needs well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are cared for, guided and supported well. The school is rightly proud of the way in which pupils mature as individuals. Pupils respond very well to the teachers' high expectations and learn to behave well and be considerate towards one another. In class discussions, for instance, pupils listen respectfully and value others' opinions. Pupils work well in lessons, although a small number of pupils need regular encouragement to complete their tasks. Pupils enjoy coming to school, with the result that the level of attendance is similar to the national average.

Pupils develop self-esteem well because of the sensitive support of all staff. They feel secure at school and know that there is always someone to confide in. They understand the importance of a healthy diet, prompted by nutritious options at lunchtime and the ready availability of fresh fruit and water. They make good progress in their cultural development; for example, pupils have recently explored the colours of autumn through their painting. Pupils learn about the cultural diversity of modern Britain through, for example, visitors to the school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school considers its teaching to be good overall and the inspectors agree with that evaluation. From the Foundation Stage onwards, the school places emphasis on pupils' self-esteem, encouraging personal development and giving pupils first-hand experiences. Discipline is effective and very good relationships between pupils and staff ensure that pupils grow in confidence and are enabled to learn effectively.

The school's assessment procedures are accurate and teachers know the ability of each pupil well. As a result, lessons are generally well prepared and explanations to pupils are clear. Through careful questioning teachers assess pupils' understanding and ensure that all are fully involved, particularly during whole-class teaching. However, the work set for the more able pupils in science does not always challenge them sufficiently.

Teachers' marking of pupils' exercise books helps pupils to understand how well they are doing and pupils confirm that they know what they have to do to improve. Teaching assistants play an effective role in many lessons through the support they give to pupils with special educational needs and this is one of the main reasons why these pupils make good progress.

.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

- Although the curriculum is satisfactory, the inspection team does not share the school's view that it is good overall. The structure for teaching all subjects is sound and pupils benefit from the school's emphasis on English and mathematics. The school also enriches pupils' experiences well through after-school clubs, visits and other activities. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from a curriculum tailored to their needs. However, teachers do not always succeed in ensuring that all pupils benefit equally from the curriculum. Despite some good improvement in resources, the school has not yet fully determined the best ways to motivate boys to learn as well as girls. The curriculum is not open-ended or flexible enough for more able pupils to reach their potential in science.

.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has good procedures and practices to ensure that pupils feel secure and cared for. Pupils confirm that they are well looked after if they are hurt or upset. Arrangements for child protection are in place and all adults, through their training, are aware of the procedures to follow.

Pupils are taught to take care of themselves and to make healthy and safe choices. The school works well with other agencies to ensure that pupils receive seamless care and the school's developing partnership with the local Sure-Start is adding to what is already a strength of the schools provision. The support and guidance that pupils receive from all adults in school is one of the reasons why pupils make good progress.

.

- Grade: 2

.

.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The inspection team agrees with the school that leadership and management are good. There is a shared sense of purpose that permeates the staff team and governing body. Everyone with a leadership role knows what is expected of them and contributes well to the school's capacity to improve.

The national Every Child Matters agenda is central to the school's work. This can be seen clearly in the way all staff contribute to pupils' personal development and well-being, and in their commitment to find ways to help pupils to achieve to their maximum capability. However, although monitoring of lessons gives the school a secure

view of the quality of teaching, it is not always sharply enough focussed on the effectiveness of the action taken to raise standards. For example, as a result of the school's self-evaluation, it has a number of strategies aimed at closing the gap between the achievement of boys and girls. Although these have had some success, as can be seen in recent test results, further improvement is still needed.

The school improvement plan is used well to help the school keep pace with national initiatives and to review the school's day-to-day work, although the key priorities stated in the plan are not sufficiently well matched to the areas for improvement that the school has identified through its self-evaluation.

Governors work closely with the school's senior leadership team. Through their own self-evaluation, the governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school; they now need to use this information to ensure that the questions they ask are insightful and focus on raising standards further.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Bedlington Steadlane First School

The Oval

Bedlington

Northumberland

NE22 5JS

30 September 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for the friendly way that you welcomed the inspectors to your school for the recent inspection. You gave us lots of information that helped us to get to know your school. We agree with you that your school is a good school and that your teachers and helpers care about you and work hard to keep you safe and happy. It is good to see that you understand how important it is to eat healthy food and that you enjoy your fruit at break times.

We are pleased that you all enjoy school and want to be good at your work. You are doing well with your reading and mathematics and your writing is getting better. Your teachers are good at helping you to understand what work they want you to do and help you if you have a problem.

We are pleased that the boys are now finding their work more interesting and are doing better in lessons. We have asked your head teacher and teachers to:

make sure that boys and girls do equally well;

make science lessons challenging for everyone;

check that the teaching you receive is always helping you to improve.

Thank you again for your help.

Linda Buller

Lead inspector

Annex B