



Stretford High School Community Language College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106370
LEA Trafford
Inspection number 283018
Inspection dates 8 November 2005 to 9 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms Sara Morrissey HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Great Stone Road
School category	Community		Stretford
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Manchester, Lancashire M32 0XA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 9124894
Number on roll	656	Fax number	0161 8771281
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr Jones
Date of previous inspection	1 December 1997	Headteacher	Mr Dereck Davies

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Introduction

Stretford High School Community Languages College was last inspected in January 2004 when it was made subject to special measures, as it did not provide an adequate education for its pupils. This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Stretford High School Community Languages College is a smaller than average secondary modern multi-cultural school, which serves areas of high socio-economic deprivation in the Trafford area of Greater Manchester. A large number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are more boys than girls at the school. A high number of pupils are asylum seekers or refugees which means that a significant proportion join or leave the school during the year. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is much higher than average. The school's specialist status in community languages was re-designated in July 2005 and it became part of a joint extended school in September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Effective leadership and management have transformed the school, which provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is improving. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Standards achieved remain well below national average. However, good teaching means that pupils make satisfactory progress overall, although not all pupils achieve as well as they can. The pupils have benefited from a new curriculum which better meets their needs. They are well cared for and supported, and this encourages them to develop healthy lifestyles, work hard and to develop their self-confidence as learners. They behave well, feel safe and are proud of their school. The headteacher's vision and clear direction has rebuilt confidence. Senior and middle managers know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and this has enabled them to make good progress in all of the areas requiring improvement, although pupils do not experience a daily act of collective worship. They have laid very secure foundations for the future; there is a strong team spirit in the school and the pupils, teachers, other staff and governors have a shared commitment to further improvement. Morale is high. Links with the local community have improved through specialist school status and through partnerships resulting from becoming an extended school. The school provides satisfactory value for money and is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards achieved by pupils at Key Stage 3 and 4.
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The standards achieved by pupils are satisfactory and improving rapidly. In 2004, standards in national tests and examinations at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 were well below average. In 2005, they rose significantly but remain well below average. Although school attainment targets in 2004 were not met, in 2005 they were met fully. Pupils enter the school with attainment levels well below the national average. In 2004 pupils made satisfactory progress overall but this was not good enough to close the gaps in their learning. The much improved 2005 results, however, indicate much stronger and more rapid pupil progress. This is because the quality of teaching has improved and as a result more pupils make good progress in lessons. Achievement has risen rapidly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), although in science, pupils make less progress. The school analyses test and examination results in great detail and, while most groups of pupils make similar progress, the school is aware that a significant number of white British boys are making slower progress than their peers. Improvement since the last

inspection has been considerable. The school is setting challenging targets for the future and is confident of reaching them. The capacity for further improvement is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development is good, well supported by the high expectations communicated through the school's mission statement. Staff work effectively to meet the specific needs of all pupils with whom they enjoy warm relationships based upon mutual respect. Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in the improved and now satisfactory attendance. Their behaviour is good; they share the high expectations of their teachers and generally act with maturity and concern for each other. Pupils feel safe and confident that teachers will help to resolve problems, for example bullying, successfully if they arise. They enjoy taking an active part in lessons and respond positively to their teachers. The school council allows the pupils to play a constructive role and pupils are consulted regularly, for example on the new behaviour policy and in designing the new school uniform. Senior prefects act as good role models, providing support for younger pupils. Pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and enjoy participating in a wide range of activities and events including fund raising for charity. The provision for social and moral development is good. Awareness and celebration of different cultures is a particular strength, supported well by established and increasing community links. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Senior pupils have gained in confidence about their future and feel better prepared for life beyond school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall, a judgement that matches the school's own evaluation. It meets the needs of most pupils and helps them to make good progress in lessons. Rigorous monitoring by senior and middle managers, and the provision of good professional development and support mean that teaching has improved very significantly since the last inspection, especially in those subjects in which it was less secure. The best teaching is characterised by outstanding planning, good subject knowledge, effective use of questions and a wide range of briskly paced activities, which engage and motivate pupils. In these lessons pupils understand what is expected of them and how to improve. They enjoy their lessons and make good gains in their learning. Where lessons are less successful, teachers talk for too long, pupils have too little chance to participate and their pace of learning slows because they lose interest. The quality of marking has improved. The school's response policy is understood by pupils; it is used by most teachers to celebrate pupils' achievement and provide guidance on how to improve. The school knows what is required to improve the quality of teaching further and is taking action to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they can.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. It meets requirements although there is no daily act of collective worship. It has been re-designed to better meet the needs of individuals, especially for those with learning difficulties and with English as an additional language. In Years 7 to 9, national strategies to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are well embedded and effective. Vulnerable pupils in Year 7 benefit from a curriculum which develops their literacy skills and raises their confidence and self-esteem. Three pathways have been introduced in Years 10 and 11 to provide a relevant curriculum which meet well the needs and interests of different groups of pupils and develops their work-related skills and economic awareness. A programme of drugs, sex and relationship education promotes healthy and safe living effectively. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities including clubs for sport, drama and to improve homework. These make a valuable contribution to pupils' enjoyment and promote a healthy lifestyle. Good use of visits and visitors enhance the curriculum and raise awareness of different cultures.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school judges its care, guidance and support as good and the inspection judgement confirms this. The school has robust procedures to identify vulnerable children and works well with a wide range of agencies to support them. Child protection procedures are fully in place. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident of receiving help and advice, should they need it.

Pupils' progress throughout their time at school is monitored carefully and most are making good progress as a result, although a significant number of white British boys do not achieve as well as they could. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress. Governors and parents have established committees to assist and guide both pupils and parents experiencing difficulties.

Transition arrangements from primary school into Year 7 are thorough but advice given in Key Stage 4 on careers and opportunities for further education is, according to the pupils, variable.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management have improved and are good overall. The headteacher has established a clear vision and direction for the school, which is shared by staff and pupils. With the able support of his senior team, he has established systems by which the school can accurately assess the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and take actions to improve it further. Middle managers check the quality of work in their subject area more accurately and are beginning to take responsibility for actions to tackle whole-school priorities. They have benefited from training to enable them

to develop their leadership skills. As a result standards are rising, and the progress that pupils make in lessons has improved. Pupils take pride in their school and their work and feel valued members of the community because their views are taken into account and they feel that adults support them well. The strengthened governing body has regained its responsibility for holding the school to account and is developing its role as a 'critical friend'. The local authority has provided good support to strengthen the capacity of leadership and management. The school knows what it needs to do to improve and is increasing its links with the community as plans are implemented to develop the extended school. Resources are used well and increased stability in staffing reflects the improved morale of staff, who are committed to further school improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money and is well placed to improve further.

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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?	3	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	NA	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	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	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?	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	2	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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us so welcome during our visit to your school. We appreciated the time that many of you gave to tell us about your work and how pupils view Stretford High School. The purpose of our visit was to find out what your school does well and the areas that need to improve. I am delighted to say that we felt that your school has made such improvement that it no longer needs to be in special measures, although there are still some areas where the school could do even better. We were impressed about the following things which we think are strengths of your school.

- The teaching is good overall which means that you are able to make better progress in your learning and gain higher grades in more of your subjects.
- Your behaviour is good; you told us that you are proud of your school and want to do well. This is something which you should continue to build on, as it is such an important part of making a school successful.
- Teachers work hard to support and help you so that you can settle quickly into school and do your best in your work.
- Your headteacher and all the staff know what needs to be done to make Stretford High a good school and are working together to make sure that you get the best possible education.

We feel that the school could improve further by:

- continuing to improve the results achieved by students at the end of Key Stage 3 and 4
- making sure that all lessons are good enough so that every student is able to learn as well as they can

You all have the responsibility to help your teachers to make these improvements by working hard, maintaining high standards of behaviour and doing your very best at Stretford High School.