

Stewart Fleming Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101594
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	286118
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Richard Moody

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Julie Fox
Headteacher	Mr John Masson
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2002
School address	Witham Road Anerley London SE20 7YB
Telephone number	020 8778 5510
Fax number	020 8659 9311

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2008
Inspection number	286118

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Stewart Fleming is a large primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high compared to other schools. The school is a community with a range of ethnic groups. Nearly a third of pupils in the school have learning difficulties or disabilities. There have been significant staffing difficulties. The previous headteacher left in the summer of 2007, and an acting headteacher is currently leading the school. The Governing Body has appointed a new headteacher to start in April 2008. The school is receiving a high level of support from the local authority.

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 special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements.

The school has had a period of instability with three headteachers and considerable staff turnover during the past two years. During this time, the behaviour of pupils became a major concern for the school and not enough was done to raise standards. The current acting headteacher, with good support from the new leadership team, has provided a calmer environment and is leading the school well. He has secured the confidence of staff, governors, and parents. However, the school does not have the capacity to improve. Recent developments have not been in place long enough for them to lead to improvements in the school. Behaviour is still not good enough to ensure pupils can quickly recover from underachievement. This together with inadequate teaching and learning and a narrow curriculum means that the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate.

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Children enter the school with standards expected for their age. They do not make enough progress in the Reception classes. Standards in the school are below average at Key Stage 1 and because pupils do not make the progress that they should, by the time they leave the school, standards are low in English and mathematics, and exceptionally low in science. Pupils do not achieve well enough in reading in both key stages. They are failing to make sufficient gains in basic skills and understanding.

There is some good teaching in the school. However, in the majority of classes, the pace is too slow and there are far too many interruptions caused by the need to deal with behaviour issues. Teaching does not challenge pupils of all abilities well enough, and many teachers do not have high expectations of pupils. Teachers do not assess pupils' work well enough to know how to help them to do better. The curriculum is too narrow, and links between subjects are not clear. Pupils speak enthusiastically about clubs and visits to places of interest, but these are not sufficiently developed to contribute effectively to the curriculum.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is inadequate. Pupils do not feel safe in school, due to the poor behaviour both in the playground and in lessons. They do not have the opportunity to develop healthy lifestyles well enough. Pupils openly say that they do not enjoy school. Their contribution to the community is satisfactory, with developing links such as that to local allotments. Pupils' lack of basic skills and the limited opportunities to develop skills in working together mean they are inadequately prepared for their future lives. The school has placed much emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This aspect of pupils' development is satisfactory, although their social development is hindered by poor behaviour.

Care, guidance and support are inadequate because of the past breakdown in behaviour management, and due to inadequate academic guidance. The school does not provide adequate value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 4

Most children start the Reception class with the skills and understanding that are appropriate for their age, although last year a few boys showed very low social and language skills. Children are not making enough progress in their Reception Year. This is especially evident in their personal development and in their speaking and reading skills. There have been recent improvements in letters and sounds work, which is aiding better writing, but children are not yet skilled enough in using this knowledge to help them to read new words. Children need to read more frequently. There are missed opportunities to extend children's skills in all areas of learning by making the most of opportunities that emerge through play activities. Creativity is very underdeveloped in terms of helping children to develop their imaginations. The school is beginning to improve provision through the help of the Local Authority but the quality of teaching and learning remains too inconsistent. The caring relationships help pupils to settle. The recent introduction of new clear assessment systems is an important development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' behaviour so that they can make the best use of their learning time.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers lift standards and promote the care and personal development of pupils.
- Improve achievement as pupils move through the school from Reception to Year 6.
- Improve teaching and the curriculum, especially the teaching of reading, mathematics and science, so that pupils enjoy learning more, make faster progress and gain the skills needed for their future lives.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement is inadequate because pupils do not make enough progress. Standards have been low at the end of Year 2 for the past three years. In reading and mathematics there has been no change over that time. In writing there has been a trend of improvement, although standards are still below the national average. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were significantly below average, and exceptionally low in science. During the short time the acting headteacher has been in post, there have been some improvements, which have resulted in pupils beginning to make better progress, but there is still far more to do. Pupils with learning difficulties in reading do not make enough progress. Where there are pockets of good teaching there is now stronger progress, as in some Year 2 and Year 6 classes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 4

Pupils' personal development and well-being are affected by the poor behaviour in the school. Although behaviour has improved, pupils still talk of bullying, and say they do not like coming to school. Some pupils do not have a general sense of respect for each other. Pupils generally lack confidence and this can come across as being defensive. In a few classes where teaching is good, teachers help pupils to gain confidence, but this is not typical. New curricular activities that explore emotional well-being aid pupils' social development. This helps them to deal with their own feelings. As one pupil said, 'If we achieve little goals, we can achieve big goals'. There are not enough stimulating resources to aid positive attitudes at playtime. The pupils make a

positive contribution to the community. Members of the School Council talked positively about their work to improve playground resources, while other pupils were enthusiastic about working with local people on an allotment. They say that they enjoy trips and they would like more. They particularly enjoyed a residential trip to Sevenoaks where they developed team-building skills. Pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reflects a stronger emphasis on this in recent changes in the curriculum.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are inadequate. Since September 2007, the school has appointed more staff with good teaching skills and this is helping to lift standards particularly in Year 2 and Year 6. However, there is not enough good teaching and learning to help pupils to recover from past underachievement. The teaching of reading is inadequate. The teaching and learning of writing, although improving in some classes, is not consistent. The teaching of mathematics is also improving, as is evident in a few lessons where pupils are talking more about how to solve mathematical problems. Not enough pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve in mathematics. In science, the school is beginning to provide pupils with more opportunities to do investigative work, but there is still a great deal to do, especially to help higher ability pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable. Teachers do not match work to the differing ability of the pupils well enough. Behaviour management is improving and in some lessons pupils behave well. However, in too many lessons low-level disruptions, restlessness and poor listening means that too much teaching time is wasted. Teaching assistants do not always support teachers well, because they are not sufficiently trained in how to perform their roles to best effect.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum is inadequately matched to pupils' needs and interests. This shows itself in pupils' lack of enjoyment in some lessons. The curriculum is not of a high enough quality to support the pupils and ensure they make satisfactory gains in basic skills and knowledge. There is an insufficient range of clubs and visits to promote enjoyment and extend wider personal development. The sporting activities available for pupils are not enough to ensure that pupils develop healthy lifestyles. Events such as the recent International Week are beginning to develop pupils' understanding of the world, at the same time as providing greater enjoyment. These types of activities are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' social and cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Whilst there are satisfactory elements of care and support, academic guidance is inadequate. New assessment systems have been in place since September 2007 to help leaders and teachers to check pupils' progress. However, in lessons, teachers miss opportunities to encourage pupils to talk about their ideas so that adults can assess pupils' learning and then adjust their teaching. Recent developments are improving assessment, and there are examples of good practice, but teachers do not always assess pupils' work accurately and marking is inconsistent, which results

in pupils not knowing exactly what they need to do to improve. Teaching assistants provide appropriate support for pupils with learning difficulties, but sometimes this support is not as effective as it could be. Pupils' attendance is improving, because of the new systems for monitoring attendance that the school has put in place, and is now satisfactory. There are effective child protection and safeguarding procedures in place. Effective links with local support agencies are developing and the school is working closely with the local authority and behaviour support services to bring about improvement. Work by a Counsellor and a Learning Mentor are strengthening pastoral care. The school's partnership with parents has improved and some parents note that the school has 'turned a corner'. However, others still have concerns about behaviour.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

There has been inadequate improvement in the school since the last inspection largely due to instability of leadership and staffing difficulties. Since the new acting headteacher and the new senior leadership team joined the school in September 2007, the school runs more smoothly on a day-to-day basis. There is now higher staff morale. The leadership team was aware of the many issues that the school faced, with very poor behaviour and inadequate systems in place, for example in teaching, tracking pupil progress, and behaviour management. Leaders and managers at all levels have now begun to put many new systems in place to bring about change. Use of new assessment and tracking systems are beginning to help improve standards, notably in Year 2 and Year 6, but they have yet to bring similar improvements throughout the remainder of the school. The monitoring and analysis of assessment information is at an early stage, and cannot ensure that the school's self-evaluation is as accurate as it should be.

Governors are very keen to support the school, but they do not provide sufficient challenge to ensure progress across all areas of school life. Until very recently they have been slow to take action to address the weaknesses in the school. The school's improvement plan prioritises the most important areas for development, but is not focused sharply enough to set out step-by-step success criteria and does not involve governors enough.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	4
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	4
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	4
How well learners enjoy their education	4
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	4
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stewart Fleming Primary School, London, SE20 7YB

You may remember that three inspectors came to your school recently. Thank you for telling us about your school. Looking at your books and talking to you about your work and your school helped us a lot in coming to our inspection findings.

We agree with your acting headteacher and other adults that the school has had a difficult time, but is now beginning to improve. The school is not yet as good as it should be for most of you. We have decided that some very important improvements and special support will be needed to help your school to improve quickly. You need more help to make faster progress. Too many of you are not doing well enough in your lessons. Teachers are working hard to make learning more challenging but there is still much more to do.

When your teachers suggest ways for you to improve your work, please follow their advice. Well done for beginning to talk more about how to solve mathematical problems, you must aim to keep this up and work hard in all lessons. You enjoy the exciting visits and extra activities that adults provide, and we agree that you should have more of these. Most of you behave well, but some of you do not behave well enough in lessons or at playtimes. We were very concerned to hear that some of you are scared of bullying. It is wrong for any pupil to be rude or unkind to others.

We have asked your acting headteacher and all of the adults in your school to make sure that you are helped to do better in all your learning by:

- checking the standards you reach to make sure you all achieve as well as you should
- improving teaching to make sure that you all have challenging, suitable and fun work to do
- making sure that bullying stops and behaviour improves so that everyone enjoys coming to school every day.

Thank you for making our visit enjoyable. I wish you the best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Moody

Lead inspector