

Stanburn First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102214
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	335860
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Raminder Arora

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs L Branch Martin
Headteacher	Mrs A Drakeford
Date of previous school inspection	3 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school single plan, assessment information, safeguarding documentation, curricular planning, a sample of pupils' writing and records of lesson observations. In addition, 176 pupil questionnaires and 71 parent questionnaires were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of teaching and the curriculum on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of subject leaders in monitoring and supporting their subject areas
- the impact of action the school has taken on improving attainment, learning and progress in mathematics.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average school. A very large majority of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, the proportion being much higher than the national average. Most pupils speak English as an additional language and many are at the early stages of learning English. About half of the pupils are of Indian origin and the most common first language is Gujarati. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Their difficulties relate mainly to speech and language and physical disabilities. The school has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Reception classes. The school has gained the Activemark and a Healthy School Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school which is held in high regard by parents and carers. One, representing the views of many, wrote, 'We find Stanburn an excellent school. Our daughter has made tremendous progress since starting school'; and another commented, 'Very happy with the school and so pleased with my children's education and discipline'. At the heart of the school is a real commitment to ensuring that every individual really matters. Good at its last inspection, the school has made significant improvements because of strong leadership by the headteacher, supported well by the senior team and governors. The school clearly demonstrates that it has excellent capacity to continue its drive to sustain the high levels of attainment and improve provision for pupils still further.

High-quality teaching and extra support for groups and individuals by the highly skilled support staff ensure that pupils, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those new to learning English, make excellent progress from their starting points which are generally below what is usually expected for their age. Children get off to a good start in Reception and make good progress through the year. As they move in to Year 1 their progress accelerates and by the time they leave, pupils attain at consistently high levels, well maintained over the years.

All groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well in their academic learning, as well as in their personal development. Attainment in writing is particularly high because pupils receive challenging and stimulating opportunities to write for specific purposes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding as the creative curriculum draws upon the school's diverse cultures very effectively and inspires pupils to do their very best. Pupils' behaviour as a result is impeccable in lessons and around the school. Pupils' motivation and enjoyment in learning is exceptionally high.

Leadership is outstanding. The senior team drive improvements in a supportive way and staff work tirelessly to embrace new developments to ensure the pupils receive the highest quality learning experiences. Planning for improvement is strongly based on an accurate view of the work of the school as a result of robust self-evaluation. For example, in the Reception classes, staff do not always make the best of use of their assessments to accelerate children's progress in all areas of their learning. Leaders are well aware of this and plans are in place to address the issue. All staff work extremely well to promote an ethos of care, mutual respect and high expectations in all their actions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Make better use of assessment practices to further support children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills that are below those expected for their age but by the end of Year 2, standards are consistently high in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Most pupils, including the significant group of pupils of Indian origin, continue to make exceptional progress in Year 3 and are doing extremely well by the time they leave. Pupils with learning difficulties, physical problems and those identified as gifted and talented achieve extremely well. Pupils of Black African origin, who have very positive attitudes to learning, and those at the early stages of learning English, make particularly rapid progress. Pupils understand their targets and show good knowledge of what they need to do to improve further. Attainment is exceptionally high in writing and has improved even further in reading this year as a result of the effective strategies the school has put in place. For example, younger pupils enjoy reading to an adult on a regular basis, which has improved their confidence and skills.

Pupils work hard and enjoy their learning. They concentrate well, making thoughtful contributions to class and group discussion. Work in books is neatly presented, showing pride and care, and handwriting is very well developed. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and those with severe behavioural difficulties learn to manage their emotions better as they progress through school. Pupils develop as well-rounded young people who are very well prepared for the next stage of their lives by the gains they make in basic and social skills, and their regular participation in sport and healthy eating habits. Overall, their attendance is in line with the national average. Pupils' spiritual development is particularly strong and they take advantage of the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings in assemblies. They show respect for the diverse range of faiths and cultures represented within the school.

In lessons, pupils' exemplary behaviour, collaborative skills and very positive attitudes to learning support their ability to meet the challenge of teachers' high expectations. All work well both independently and in groups, and are able to concentrate for sustained periods of time, showing enjoyment in their learning. Notable examples of this were the Year 1 pupils working in the environmental area on an exciting variety of activities with great enthusiasm. Pupils in small groups were engaged in learning about the old and the new, using the school's very own 'Blast Shelter' to bring history alive. Pupils working in 'Catch Up' and 'Precision teaching' support groups show exemplary progress.

A striking feature of the school is the caring way pupils look after each other. Pupils showed high self-esteem and pride for the school and what they do well. In the playground, pupils were seen enjoying the social time together, treating each other kindly and speaking to adults with respect. Pupils, and their parents/carers, report there is no bullying. Pupils know how to stay safe, who to go to if there are problems and say that any concern is dealt with promptly.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is often outstanding, both in classroom situations and as part of the group and individual support. Teachers plan carefully and are skilled in providing challenges for pupils of different levels of ability so that the work becomes progressively more difficult. Pupils are very well supported and often exceed their targets. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and relate very positively to them. They have well-established routines that help the smooth running of lessons. Good dialogue, based on the teachers' skilful questioning, often makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. Teachers are very effective at explaining new concepts and invariably provide excellent help for their pupils through individual support when pupils have difficulty in understanding.

The curriculum is outstanding and very effective in helping to promote high standards overall. The school has worked hard to make the curriculum exciting and creative. Pupils thrive on the opportunities this provides, for example, in stimulating work related to the Uganda project. The curriculum is highly effective in meeting the specific needs of different groups of pupils. For example, provision for the gifted and talented is

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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impressive. These pupils receive effective support and challenge from both the teaching and the support staff and their progress is monitored rigorously. Teachers' marking is very supportive and any comments are carefully followed up. The recent strategies implemented by the school to ensure that boys achieve as well as the girls, and that pupils from different backgrounds do as well as others, are having a positive effect. There are an extensive range of visitors, visits, clubs and opportunities for learning outdoors. The curriculum promotes cultural awareness, financial understanding and healthy lifestyles exceptionally well. In the case of the latter, this is recognised in the school's national awards.

The pastoral care for pupils, including their safety, is of high quality. Plans are well structured to support the vulnerable and those with physical disabilities. However, this work is not carried out consistently. The school is aware of this and is working towards further strengthening the provision, for example, ensuring the implementation of a careful and complete care plan for pupils with any such difficulties and making the provision consistently effective. Pupils appreciate and fully comply with the school's guidance on internet safety.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is a strong leader with a clear direction and a vision which is shared by and which empowers all staff. Senior leaders are a very committed team and all at the school are focused relentlessly on further improvement. This has enabled the school to achieve excellence. The school knows itself very well and sets the right targets to become even better. All subject leaders are closely involved in monitoring the school's work, which they do rigorously and with tremendous enthusiasm. Documentation is impressive and the evaluation of the school's work is honest and accurate. Good use is made of governors' professional knowledge and expertise to evaluate the work of the school. They hold leaders to account in a challenging but supportive manner. Governors are aware that their monitoring role is not as strongly developed as it might be and have developed a strategic plan to monitor all aspects of the school and work closely with senior and subject leaders.

The school does much to promote community cohesion and works very effectively with other local schools, the Stanmore Consortium and Stanburn Middle School. Its work with a Ugandan school is impressive. The planning and strategies for action are underpinned

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by a comprehensive analysis of the school's context. Equal opportunities are promoted excellently as part of the school's ethos and practice. Everyone is valued and supported to achieve their best irrespective of their social, faith or ethnic group. Parents and carers are happy with school's communication and particularly value the website. The school values their views, takes them seriously and responds swiftly, which they appreciate. For example, leaders work closely with parents and carers to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality. Partnerships with outside agencies such as the police, different religious groups, and health professionals are well developed. Leaders, including governors, have focused rigorously to improve systems for safeguarding. These are very thorough and a wide range of relevant training has been provided for staff.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in Reception and most make good progress from generally below-average starting points, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy, and social and emotional development. Their attainment when they leave Reception is broadly average. Children's personal development is good and contributes to their good progress and social skills. All children work and play harmoniously. Good provision made for their welfare means that they settle into school quickly and happily, have very positive relationships with staff and come to enjoy learning. The staff get to know children well and understand their learning and social needs. There are very good procedures to support children entering Reception and then moving into Year 1.

Teaching is consistently good and the adults are skilled in helping children to develop

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their knowledge and understanding when they work with them in groups, for example, learning the sequence of numbers when children engaged in a range of outdoor learning activities. Staff provide a range of exciting things for children to do which engage their interest and enthusiasm. There is a good balance between activities directed by the staff and those that children choose for themselves. The early introduction of strategies to link sounds and letters prepares them well in learning how to read and write. The provision for children to learn outdoors is good and is often planned as an extension and consolidation of the learning taking place indoors. Children are able to move freely between indoor and outdoor play.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Assessment of children's progress is suitably carried out and provides a sound overview of their progress. However, the use of assessment to effectively plan work and carefully meet children's varying needs is not fully consistent. Parents and carers are very pleased with the provision and give it their overwhelming support.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Of the high proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire and the parent who spoke to the lead inspector, the overwhelming majority were very positive about the school. There were a significant number of complimentary comments about the headteacher and the improvements she has made to the school. Other positive comments included the commitment and talent of the staff, the good levels of care, the nurturing ethos, the range of activities of interest, and how much the children enjoy school and achieve well. In essence, the findings of inspection reflected the views of parents and carers. A small number of parents and carers had minor concerns and constructive suggestions to make. Issues raised covered several areas and in the main related to the individual parent/carer concerned.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stanburn First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 71 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 359 parents and carers registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	51	35	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	53	30	43	4	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	23	43	61	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	22	45	64	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	36	40	57	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	24	45	64	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	51	33	47	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	24	39	55	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	24	42	60	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	16	44	62	7	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	16	47	67	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	38	37	53	4	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	41	36	51	5	7	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stanburn First School, Stanmore HA7 2PE

Thank you very much for your very friendly welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our two days very much and were really pleased to hear how excited and proud you are about your school. We enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn really well in the Blast Shelter. What delightful children you are! Your school is outstanding. Here are some of the special things that it does superbly:

- You are very well looked after and all the adults want to do their best for you. This means that your personal development, including your behaviour, is outstanding. Your attitudes to learning are of the highest quality and you care for each other brilliantly.
- In Reception you get off to a good start in all aspects of learning. You make excellent progress and are doing very well by the time you leave in Year 3. This is because your teachers plan exciting and challenging activities for you, which help you to enjoy school and develop a real love of learning.
- The class representatives take their responsibilities seriously. You all look after each other really well and show respect.
- There are interesting activities and visits which you participate in enthusiastically. You contribute well to the local community and care for those who are less well off than you.
- Your headteacher is really good! You have wonderful adults supporting you, including dedicated governors who are always looking for ways to make your school become even better.

To become even better, we have asked the school to make sure that teachers use the information they gain about how well children are doing in the Reception classes to improve their progress even further. You can help by continuing to work hard and by coming to school every day.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for your help and wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Raminder Arora

Lead Inspector

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