

St Stephen's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107323
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	336869
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr G Budd
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Heathcote
Date of previous school inspection	18 April 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons or parts of lessons and observed 13 teachers during the inspection. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's plans, self-evaluation, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Questionnaires from 42 parents, 44 pupils and three staff were analysed

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

- how well the school supports the progress of boys in English and mathematics
- whether the quality of teaching is as consistently strong as the school indicates, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the strengths of the creative curriculum in terms of pupils' outcomes
- how well leadership drives improvement of outcomes and provision
- whether the impact of the school's promotion of equality of opportunity is as effective as it suggests, particularly in relation to the progress of different groups of pupils.

Information about the school

This large school serves a diverse community. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. Fewer pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which is Pakistani, and most speak English as an additional language. The school has many awards, including Investors in People, Investors in Pupils, and Activemark Gold. The standard pupil admission number is to rise to 60 from September 2010.

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

St Stephen's is an outstanding school. It provides outstanding value for money as pupils of all abilities and backgrounds learn and progress exceptionally well. This highly inclusive school keenly promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination assiduously. St Stephen's lives up to its vision of being 'a stepping stone to the future' as it provides excellent outcomes for pupils. Ambitious leadership ensures that the school has gone from strength to strength in recent years. The school's track record of improvement, accurate self-evaluation, and a relentless impetus to become even better, demonstrate clearly its outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. Excellent leadership and high-quality teaching supported by meticulous assessment and a highly innovative curriculum, form the central hub from which other successes emanate. Parents and carers typically confirm the value they place on the school with comments such as, 'My child is educated to a high standard, in a caring environment,' and, 'Full marks to the school.'

Good outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage help children get off to a successful start in their learning and development. Excellent early years' leadership ensures that practice is developing apace. Even so, this evolving provision does not consistently match the high quality found elsewhere in school, particularly with regard to children's learning outdoors. Pupils acquire extensive knowledge about how to live healthily and safely. Their first-rate behaviour ensures that they make the most of their time in school. They also make significant contributions to the school and wider communities. The school pays close attention to areas such as the progress boys make in writing and mathematics by seeking motivating topics such as 'mini-enterprise' or developing pupils' understanding of engineering skills. Individualised learning support programmes for pupils of all abilities, including those with particular gifts and talents or with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are of a consistently high quality. The superbly creative curriculum enables pupils to experience memorable opportunities they may not otherwise enjoy. Well-structured leadership and monitoring programmes support strong outcomes in teaching and learning. Coupled with outstanding care, guidance and support, these help pupils to achieve their academic and personal potential.

Excellent partnership work with schools in other communities opens pupils' minds to life in rural or mono-ethnic settings very different from their own. Similarly, high quality links with parents and carers ensure that they play an increasingly active role in their children's learning, often developing their own skills at the same time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Develop further the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving the quality and deployment of some resources, particularly outdoors
 - enabling children to choose more frequently when to learn and play outdoors
 - providing a greater focus on the importance of books to support children's communication, language and literacy skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils confirm that 'they love school' and that 'lessons are fun'. They respond with enthusiasm to investigations and other practical activities in lessons that drive much of their learning. They relish going out of school on visits as these open up a range of experiences far removed from their everyday lives. Pupils respond very well to teachers' creative approaches. They persevere particularly well with these tasks. They show well-developed collaborative skills as they work successfully in pairs and groups. Pupils who lack confidence when speaking benefit from small group work in 'a room for you', which is a calm and softly lit purpose-built prayer room. Pupils work there in total confidence, using simple vocabulary or body language to convey differing emotions. This approach boosts their self-confidence, particularly when they are at the very early stages of learning to speak English. Pupils attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 and standards at Year 6 continue to rise every year. Pupils aspire to do well in the next stages of their education and follow the positive role models set by adults in school. They know the value of punctuality and trustworthiness and the large majority attends regularly. Chronic illness and other mitigating circumstances limit the attendance of a few pupils. Parents are pleased that their children are well prepared for the future.

Pupils cement strong relationships and try to uphold the core values of the school in their daily lives. They say, 'We all try to work and be good friends and also we help out other children'. They agree that pupils usually behave very well. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of what constitutes safe practices and how to live increasingly healthy lives. They enjoy the extra-curricular clubs which include sports, drama and gardening and learn more about how to make the school a more sustainable community. Committed eco-warriors play a key role in reminding the whole school of this priority.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers are creative, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They plan thoroughly and engage pupils in lessons from their very first introductory remarks. Teachers astutely deploy the skilful teaching assistants who offer appropriate levels of challenge to the more and less able pupils so that they reach their potential in lessons. New technologies are used regularly in lessons to generate interest and to establish links between different areas of learning. This helps pupils to see the relevance of the work they do. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide clear indications of what they must do to improve. Consistent assessment systems make an excellent contribution to improving outcomes throughout the school.

Innovative leadership and staffing are at the heart of a cutting-edge curriculum. For instance, the partnership established with a local theatre provides a unique opportunity for pupils to experience working in a theatre and to contribute, through teamwork, to a dramatic performance. The school takes an increasingly creative approach to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is a similarly excellent level of support for pupils learning to speak English as an additional language. Pupils have their first taste of speaking French, German and Italian at an early age. They thoroughly enjoy the emphasis on the spoken language that the school adopts.

All adults, under the close direction of the inclusion team, pay excellent attention to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and parents and carers confirm this. There are well-established links with a wide range of outside support agencies and these ensure that all pupils engage effectively in their learning. The school works meticulously to improve pupils' attendance, often in very

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challenging circumstances. Transition and induction are handled with great care. External specialists such as street-dancers have a positive impact on pupils' emotional health and well-being

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

There is common purpose and keen ambition within the senior leadership team to drive improvement year-on-year. Motivated by the determination of the headteacher, senior leaders enthuse the rest of the staff team to take on further challenges. There is a strong team spirit here. All staff, including the high-quality administrative, ancillary and lunchtime teams, have opportunities for professional development. Knowledgeable governors offer challenge and support to the school in equal measure. They continue to develop their skills to meet the needs of the school. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination exceptionally well. Consequently, all members of the school community, irrespective of ability, background or need, achieve their best. In addition, the school prides itself on the support it provides to local voluntary groups. Good procedures ensure high priority for site safety. Pupils are secure and well-cared for. Knowledgeable and vigilant staff identify swiftly any vulnerable pupils and put the right support in place. The school takes its duty to promote community cohesion seriously. Senior leaders analyse the school's context carefully and strive to meet local needs. Staff meet with leaders of other faith schools such as the Madrassa. Religious celebrations such as Christmas and Eid are celebrated by the whole school. Staff made a study visit to Germany in order to assess how best to improve linking schools and to develop learning at a global level.

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

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	
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in Nursery and Reception. The school has recently redeveloped the outdoor environment and this provides exciting areas for children to explore. Nonetheless, some resources are past their best. At times, staff put too many activities outdoors at once and the learning environment becomes cluttered. This makes purposeful play more difficult. Children do sometimes choose when to play and learn outdoors but this is still overly prescribed by adults and limits children's developing independence. Inside, learning areas are bright and engaging, although the book stock is well thumbed and unattractively stored. Adults are well qualified and keen to develop further their professional skills. Children respond very well to practical activities and to working with information and communication technology. For instance, Reception children settled quickly in the computer suite and were soon labelling different characters illustrated on the front cover of a book. They drew label lines and then made plausible efforts to write the corresponding words such as 'dinosaur' and 'frog'.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has led huge change in a relatively short period of time. Accurate self-evaluation identifies what needs to develop. Meticulous tracking of children's progress shows clearly how their skills are developing. Children's progress is recorded in detailed 'learning journey' books for parents and carers, children, and staff to enjoy. Home-school links are a key focus for staff with much emphasis on bilingual communication in order for parents and carers to understand better how they can support their children's learning at home.

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	1

Views of parents and carers

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

Fifteen per cent of all parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. They are very supportive of the school and reflect feedback from the school's own surveys during the year. A very few parents and carers raised individual concerns but there was no underlying pattern to these. Inspectors did not find evidence to support these opinions during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Stephen's CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 294 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	69	12	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	69	13	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	67	14	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	67	13	31	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	62	16	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	69	11	26	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	64	14	33	0	0	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)	25	60	14	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	69	11	26	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	57	17	40	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	45	18	43	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	71	10	24	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	79	8	19	0	0	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.



19 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Stephen's CofE Primary School, Bradford, BD5 7HU

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I inspected your school with my colleagues. We appreciated the help you gave us and enjoyed listening to your views. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

You may not be surprised to learn that we judge St Stephen's to be an outstanding school. All of you, whatever your individual needs, learn exceptionally well. You take very good care of each other and the school is happy and calm because you behave so well. You told us that teachers make sure that lessons are fun and we saw that ourselves. You all respond so well to the many opportunities to develop creatively and we saw that during the time we spent at the playhouse with some of you. Your headteacher has a very clear idea of how she wants the school to develop and all the staff and governors support her well. Your parents and carers told us, and we saw from the school's own questionnaires, that they value the school and its work.

Part of our job is to see if there is anything your school could do better. I have asked your headteacher and the governors to develop teaching and resources even more in the Early Years Foundation Stage, even though a lot of work has already been done there.

Carry on enjoying school, looking after the wormery, and helping your school to become even more sustainable in the future.

We send you our very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Jane Hughes

Lead inspector

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