

Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132086
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	341286
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2010
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	374
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Hensley
Headteacher	Jan Cousins
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2007
School address	109 Southgate Sutton Hill Telford
Telephone number	01952 388010
Fax number	01952 388017
Email address	jan.cousins@taw.org.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2010
Inspection number	341286

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 28 lessons taught by 13 members of staff. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. No parents or carers requested a meeting. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' attainment and progress, curriculum plans, and results of the school's monitoring of its own performance. They received 64 responses to the questionnaires for parents and carers, along with responses from pupils and staff to their questionnaires.

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

- whether pupils of middle ability and higher ability are making enough progress in Years 3 to 6
- if attainment in English has improved as a result of actions taken by the school
- the accuracy of the school's monitoring in providing a clear picture of the school's provision and its impact on the pupils
- whether the gaps in progress of different groups in the school are closing.

Information about the school

This large primary school serves a housing estate on the outskirts of Telford. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Almost all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The number on roll at the school has fallen significantly since the school was last inspected.

The school hosts The Stop, a provider of after-school care. This is privately managed and so is subject to a separate inspection.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Many aspects of the school's work have improved significantly since the previous inspection, and this good rate of improvement is still continuing. Aspects such as assessment and behaviour, which were previously inadequate, are now satisfactory and poor teaching has been eliminated. Attainment remains low in Year 6, reflecting a legacy of slow progress in the past, with few pupils reaching level 5. Nevertheless, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now making satisfactory progress, and attainment is rising strongly in all year groups. Progress is now consistently good from Nursery to Year 2, and attainment is above average in Year 2 as a consequence. Throughout these year groups, teachers use the results of assessments well to match work accurately to the pupils' differing abilities. Some marked differences between the performances of different groups remain in Years 3 to 6. Less-able pupils, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their curriculum is well planned, and they receive well-focussed support in lessons. Pupils of middle ability in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress. They have made up the ground lost in the past, particularly in English where attainment has shown considerable improvement this year. Key to this improvement has been the provision of one-to-one tuition in the mornings, which has boosted pupils' progress. More able pupils make slower progress than others. The work given to them is not always challenging enough and they have not received the benefit of the one-to-one tuition.

The biggest improvement is in the care, guidance and support offered to pupils, which is now a strength of the school when previously it was inadequate. As a result, pupils enjoy their education more and feel very safe at the school. They trust their teachers and know that they always have someone to talk to if they have a problem. Attendance has improved, and is no longer low. Nevertheless, this improvement is not fully secure. Those pupils supported by the Education Welfare Officer are attending school more frequently, but this is a relatively small group. Pupils are friendly and get on well with one another. Their understanding of how those from different backgrounds and cultures live their lives is less well developed because there is a lack of focus on this area in the curriculum, and pupils do not have enough opportunities to engage with those from areas different to their own.

The reasons for the school's good improvement are firmly rooted in its leadership and management. The school's leaders, including governors, work as a team to drive up achievement through improved provision. Self-evaluation is accurate and clearly identifies where the school needs to concentrate its efforts for further improvement. Most of these aspects form priorities in the school development plan, although

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

attendance does not feature sufficiently. Overall, the school is well placed to sustain its improvement in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportions of Year 6 pupils reaching level 5 in English and mathematics to the national average by July 2011 by:
 - providing more-able pupils in Years 3 to 6 with consistently challenging work
 - ensuring curriculum plans provide clear guidance on what is expected of more-able pupils in Years 3 to 6
 - increasing the number of pupils receiving one-to-one tuition.
- Ensure pupils have a good understanding of how people from other cultures and backgrounds live their lives by:
 - extending the school's links with other schools, both nationally and internationally, so that pupils can directly engage with those from other cultures and backgrounds
 - having a sharper focus on multicultural education in the curriculum.
- Raise attendance to 95% by July 2011 by:
 - involving more pupils in the support provided by the Education Welfare Officer
 - making attendance a clear priority in the school development plan.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Inspectors observed a clear pattern of improving attainment and progress in lessons. Many more pupils than previously were seen to be reaching the levels expected for their ages, reflecting their satisfactory achievement. The school now exceeds the 'National Challenge' benchmarks. Pupils particularly enjoyed the starts of lessons, and this enjoyment was maintained in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' interest sometimes waned when they had to sit and listen for too long. When they started work on their own tasks, all concentrated well. They cooperated when they got stuck, but sometimes lacked the self-confidence to have a go for themselves. More able pupils behaved well, even when they found the work easy. They completed it as quickly as they could, and then waited patiently for their teacher to give them another task. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, on the other hand, never had to wait. There was always a teaching assistant available to keep them focussed and thinking hard.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles, and demonstrate that they are putting this into action in the healthy food they choose to eat at breaktimes. They enjoy the extra activities that are available to them, especially the

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

sport, and take up is high. Pupils play a good part in the school and local community. In school, older pupils provide good role models by, for example, listening to younger ones read. Outside of school, pupils work with the parish council, for example, to improve the environment. This also reflects their understanding of global issues, promoted by the pupils themselves through their Eco club and environmental garden.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching has much improved. It is now good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, but more variable in quality. The high proportion of inadequate teaching evident in recent years has been totally eliminated and teaching overall is now satisfactory. Teachers choose interesting starting points for lessons, such as video clips, texts that the pupils find interesting or software that illustrates a particular concept that the teacher wishes to reinforce. This often enthuses the pupils and they are keen to get on with their own activities. However, in Years 3 to 6, the teachers will often continue to show pupils how to do the task, even when the more-able pupils make it clear that they already know what to do. In Years 1

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

and 2, teachers give individual pupils work that builds on their prior learning. In Years 3 to 6 though, pupils of middle- and higher-ability pupils are often given the same work. This stretches the middle-ability pupils, but restricts the achievements of the more able. Teaching assistants are adept at questioning lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They make them think hard about their answers and work things out for themselves, which results in them making better progress than others.

The headteacher's door is always open to pupils if they want to talk to her, however, they also have faith in a very wide range of other staff too. Behaviour has improved because all staff now take a consistent approach to managing disruption of any sort. Exclusion rates are much lower than previously and continue to fall. The school is particularly good at identifying pupils in need of extra support, and matching such support to their needs. The learning mentor and nurture group, for example, are very effective in helping those pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour and working with others. The nurture group was observed playing with each other, sharing tools and always being polite by using 'please' and 'thank you' when asking for toys. Their behaviour was impeccable and clearly shows the impact of the school's provision on individual pupils. Good links are maintained with local secondary and special schools to ensure pupils are well prepared for their move from one school to the next. The school also goes a step further, by having an induction period that helps pupils move from year to year within the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

This is a school with high staff morale. All staff and governors know that they are only partway along a journey to providing the best possible education for pupils because the school's leaders are realistic, with a complete lack of complacency. The headteacher has high expectations of both staff and pupils. The governing body holds the headteacher to account well through performance management, but is also supportive when difficult but necessary decisions have to be taken. The school's leaders have successfully raised the proportions of pupils who reach the nationally expected standards for their ages, and are now planning to increase the proportions exceeding these levels. They know what needs to be done, because checks on lessons are accurate and identify exactly where each teacher can improve their performance. When the school takes action, it is

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

invariably successful. With such a strong focus on improving achievement, however, it is not surprising that some other aspects have not shown the same level of improvement. Community cohesion, for example, is on the list of aspects needing work. A basic audit has been carried out, but provision across the different strands is patchy.

Specialist outside support for pupils is used whenever necessary, and other schools are now benefiting from the expertise of Sir Alexander Fleming's staff as they lead initiatives in the local authority. Parents and carers are now much more involved with the school. Staff are particularly active in finding ways of helping the parents and carers of children who may be considered vulnerable to support their children at home to make sure they get the most from their education. The school adopts good practice across all areas of safeguarding, with particularly good site security and procedures for working with parents and carers who may feel more nervous about coming into school. Good use is made of data from assessments to identify those who need extra help, but this is now showing up more differences in performance between groups. Nevertheless, all policies and procedures are in place to ensure satisfactory equality.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children arrive at Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding that are low for their age. Some children are very unsure of themselves when they join, and staff spend a lot of their time simply reassuring them and helping them to integrate. Some need such support for much longer. There are particular issues with speech and language development that are dealt with most effectively through the school's work on phonics

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

and, in particular, the 'Every Child a Talker' project. These help children make good progress as soon as they start their education, and as their language improves, so does their performance in other areas of learning. The result is children make good progress and start Year 1 with levels of attainment that are a little, but not a lot, below average in all areas of learning.

The key to success lies in good team work on the part of skilled practitioners. Staff plan together and make the most of children enjoyment of play to provide memorable learning experiences. There is a good balance between activities led by the staff and those chosen by the children themselves. Most children engage well in the activities; those that do not are quickly spotted and helped to join in. The learning environment is both practical and beautiful, with exceptionally high quality resources in a large open space. There are areas devoted to each of the areas of learning, both inside and out with children able to move freely between them. Tracking of children's progress is meticulous and helps the manager identify exactly where support is needed. Good progress had been made since the previous inspection, particularly in enhancing the provision for communication, language and literacy.

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

The relatively small proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about most aspects of their children's education, and inspectors agree with their views. Some wrote of their concerns regarding the way that behaviour is managed. They felt that some poorly behaved pupils receive too much support at the expense of others. Inspectors found that this was not the case. The support that some pupils receive to help them manage their own behaviour is very effective and in no way detracts from the support provided to other pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sir Alexander Fleming 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 374 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	50	30	47	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	41	35	55	2	3	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	44	30	47	4	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	33	37	58	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	39	37	58	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	34	37	58	2	3	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	36	37	58	0	0	1	2
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)	20	31	33	52	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	34	36	56	3	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	33	30	47	11	17	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	31	32	50	5	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	23	36	34	53	3	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	44	31	48	1	2	1	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



17 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School, Telford, TF7 4HG

Many thanks for all the help you gave us when we inspected your school. Most of you were polite and well behaved when talking to us. You told us that you enjoy coming to school because teachers make lessons fun, they look after you well and you have lots of friends. We agree with you. Your teachers are good at spotting those of you who may be unhappy, or need a little bit of extra help in making, and keeping, friends. They know exactly what to do in these situations, and have lots of ways to help you.

Overall, we found that you are getting a satisfactory education. There have been many improvements since your school was last inspected and it is getting better all the time. Your behaviour is better, but some of you could still come to school more often, and we have asked the school to give you more help to do this. You can help by always coming to school whenever you are well enough. More of you are reaching the levels that we would expect for pupils of your ages, but some of you in Years 3 to 6 could still reach higher levels. So we have asked your teachers to make sure that you are always given tasks that you find difficult, but achievable if you work really hard. This is already happening in other years, where pupils are making good progress. You can help, by telling your teachers as soon as you need more difficult work to do. You all get on very well with one another, and do a lot to help the school in the local area. You do not know as much about how people live in areas different from your own. We have asked your teachers to teach you more about this, and to make links with other schools around the world so that you can talk to pupils of your own age, and find out for yourselves what it is like to live where they do.

Your headteacher, and others who help her, know what still needs to be done in order to make the school even better. All the staff are determined to provide you with the best possible education, and they are well on their way to doing so.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.