

INSPECTION REPORT

STATHAM COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lymm

LEA area: Warrington LEA

Unique reference number: 111005

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Hall

Reporting inspector: Mr. A. Portlock
21411

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 January 2000

Inspection number: 182485

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Warrington Road Statham Lymm Cheshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. G. Dutton
Date of previous inspection:	01 – 04 May 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Statham Community Primary is an infant and junior school for children aged 4 to 11. It is situated in the village of Lymm, near Warrington. It serves the village, and the surrounding area. There are 163 pupils on roll, which is a smaller number of pupils than in most primary schools. Pupil numbers have risen from 141 pupils in 1995 and more sharply during 1999. The children start school in the September in the year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, 17 children in the reception class were under five. Overall, the attainment of the pupils on entry is broad, but mostly above average for their age. Five pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Five pupils do not speak English as their first language, which is a bit higher than in most schools. The school has identified 24 pupils as having special educational needs and two pupils have statements of educational need. This is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, with many very good features. By the time the pupils leave the school they achieve well above average standards in English, mathematics and Science. Throughout the school the standards achieved in reading and mathematics are high. The pupils make good progress in these subjects, largely because of the consistently effective teaching, the very good pupil attitudes and behaviour, the parental support and the quality of leadership. The headteacher and governors are well placed to evaluate the school's performance. The school provides very effectively for the needs of all pupils and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- There is a very positive ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to sustaining and raising the high standards achieved, especially in reading and mathematics.
- The good teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities are making good progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The pupils are very keen learners and behave very well; the teachers and other adults provide very positive role models.
- The parents support their children's education very well and overall are very satisfied with the education it provides.

What could be improved

- Key Stage 1 pupils need more opportunities to develop the main features of different types of writing in English lessons and in other subjects.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in May 1995 found Statham Primary to be a good school. The school has continued to improve in many areas, including the raising of standards and the improving quality of teaching. These are now very much better. The recent appointment of the headteacher, supported by the deputy-headteacher, has challenged the school to raise further the quality of education. Teachers' assessment procedures are now more effective. Subject policies and schemes of work are now in place. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the school are now very much better, and the monitoring role of the subject co-ordinators is being developed. Improvements have been made in information and communication technology and music and standards are now at least satisfactory. There have been improvements in the quality and range of resources and in the quality of teaching in both subjects. The school is well placed, through its leadership and expertise in teaching, to continue to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	A	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	A	A	
Science	A	C	A	A	

Nearly all five-year-olds achieve higher standards than is normally expected for their age. The results of national tests for seven-year-olds are also well above average overall, particularly in reading and mathematics. In writing, very nearly all pupils are attaining the national average. However, higher attaining pupils are not achieving as well in writing as they are in reading and mathematics.

By the time they leave the school the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The trend in the school's results for all core subjects over the last four years shows that it is steadily improving and is broadly in line with the national trend. Because of improved evaluation procedures, the school is now setting appropriate targets. The work that the pupils were doing during the inspection confirms these standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils are very keen to learn. They settle quickly to their work and demonstrate very good attitudes in all that they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. The pupils are courteous and polite.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils' personal development is good overall. Pupils of differing ages and abilities help each other and are encouraged to do so.
Attendance	Attendance is good, punctuality is very good and the pupils enjoy coming to school.

The pupils have very clear understanding of the importance of improving their work and their very good attitudes and relationships are key features in sustaining the high standards achieved. There are very effective routines and expectations and these ensure the high standards of behaviour and personal development. The high standards in attendance and punctuality indicate the very good support from parents and the fact that pupils enjoy coming to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is good overall and very good for the under fives. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching throughout the school is good or better in about nine out of every ten lessons and very good or better in over one third of lessons. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan and assess the work effectively, particularly for literacy and numeracy. The teachers set high standards and have effective teaching methods. All pupils are made aware of what they are expected to learn and what they have achieved. This is particularly true in literacy and numeracy lessons; pupils are taught these skills well. The school meets the needs of all pupils well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and appropriate to the needs of all the pupils. All statutory requirements are met. Visits, including residential visits, and visitors to the school enhance the pupils' understanding of the world around them. Extra-curricular activities for junior pupils are satisfactory and include a variety of activities, including sport and music
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The work for pupils with special educational needs is carefully planned and ensures that they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The needs of the small number of pupils with English as an additional language is effectively being met, both in the classroom and when they are withdrawn from lessons for specific, additional work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The pupils are involved in setting the very effective codes of behaviour and the staff act as very good role models, enabling the pupils to develop a clear social and moral awareness. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' spiritual development through the way the pupils are given opportunities to reflect upon their work and the world around them. There is good provision for their cultural development in their English, history, geography, art and music work.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The staff work hard to develop pupils' self-esteem and to ensure that the school is a secure and safe environment.

The curriculum effectively supports the needs of all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as a second language. All areas of the curriculum meet the statutory requirements. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively introduced and are having a positive effect upon pupils' learning. The pupils are very well cared for.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is developing a very positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to achieve high standards. The headteacher and deputy-headteacher work as an effective team and are well supported by the other members of staff. The school is a welcoming place.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is effectively led and supports the school well. The governors are improving their knowledge of the school and are using this to set clear targets for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	In a short time, the headteacher, with good support from the deputy-headteacher, other staff and governors, has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. These are already providing valuable information for school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of staff, accommodation and learning resources. It has sound procedures for prioritising the resources it needs and for judging how effectively it is using them.

The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and is effectively supported by the deputy-headteacher and governors. There is a commitment to achieve high standards. The headteacher is developing an effective staff team and has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. There are sound procedures for prioritising the resources the school needs and for judging how effectively it is using them.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The good teaching.</p> <p>The school has high expectations and the children make good progress.</p> <p>The school is well led and managed.</p> <p>The children like school.</p> <p>The children are well behaved.</p> <p>The school is always approachable and willing to listen.</p> <p>The school works closely with parents.</p>	<p>The amount of work the children do at home.</p> <p>The range of activities provided outside lessons.</p>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. There is a clear homework policy that has been shared with parents, including a meeting. During the inspection appropriate homework was set and discussed with the pupils when it was returned. The amount is similar to that of other primary schools. There is a satisfactory range of extra activities offered to junior age pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

There is a very positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to sustain and raise further the high standards achieved.

1. The school's very positive ethos reflects its aims and the commitment to sustain, and raise further, the high standards that are being achieved in English, mathematics and science. The parents support the school very well and share its high expectations. There is a strong determination by the headteacher, staff, governors and parents to continue to raise standards. The pupils' attitudes to their work are very good and this is very effectively supporting their learning. Attendance is good, punctuality is very good and the pupils enjoy coming to school.
2. The school and parents are proud of the standards that the pupils achieve. The results of the 1999 national tests for 11-year-olds, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, confirm this view and clearly show the high standards that the school is achieving. In relation to all other schools, it is well above average in all these subjects. The school has been improving its results over the last four years, in line with the national trend. Taking these subjects together for the last four years, the performance of the pupils is well above average. When compared to similar schools in 1999, it is well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English.
3. The 1999 national test results for 7-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics also show well above average standards when compared to all schools, and above average when compared to similar schools. Reading and mathematics are strengths of the school; over the last four years standards have been maintained at well above average levels. In writing, very nearly all pupils reach standards expected for their age but few are reaching the higher levels. The headteacher has already identified the need to improve further the quality of the pupils' writing throughout the school and with the deputy-headteacher has put in place strategies to bring about this improvement.
4. The school is effectively led by the headteacher, with very good support from the deputy-headteacher. They work as an effective team and are well supported by the governors and other members of staff. Both have been in post for two terms, and are already making an impact upon the quality of learning. The headteacher has developed procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. For example, following the purchase of new computer software, the effectiveness of pupils' learning and standards will be closely monitored. The school has identified various areas, such as improving the quality of the pupils' writing, for school improvement and has put in place appropriate monitoring systems. These will allow the management team, governors and teachers to evaluate more effectively the progress all pupils are making and allow appropriate resources to be made available as needed. The governing body is well led and the governors are increasingly improving their knowledge of how well the school is doing and are using this to set clear targets for development. For instance, they are preparing a monitoring report on how well the curriculum is being taught and evaluated. The headteacher has also successfully worked hard to make the school a friendly, welcoming place. The parents say that they feel happy coming into the school and are encouraged to do so.

The good teaching ensures that the pupils of all abilities are making good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.

5. The quality of teaching is good or better in about nine out of every ten lessons and very good or better in over one third of lessons. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. This is particularly true in literacy and numeracy lessons; pupils are taught these skills well. The school meets the needs of all pupils well.
6. There is very much a team atmosphere in the school. All of the members of staff are committed to doing their best for the pupils and there is a consistency about the way in which they work with them. Very good relationships are formed, which are seen in the mutual respect between teachers and pupils. Teachers bring out the best in the pupils and strive to develop the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. For example, in an assembly, a Year 6 boy was praised for a story he had written and he had the opportunity to tell his story to the rest of the pupils. He did this with enthusiasm and in a mature way. Younger and less confident pupils also had similar opportunities to share their work and it was received with the same respect.
7. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good, with most teachers capable of very good teaching. Teachers use their good knowledge of the pupils to plan appropriate and challenging work. They set high standards of work and behaviour and use a wide range of teaching methods to develop the pupils' skills and understanding. All pupils are made aware of what they are expected to learn in the lesson and teachers involve the pupils in assessing what they have achieved. For example, in an English lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils were writing different types of story, such as myths and legends of their own. Whilst one boy was sharing his work with the class, a very good discussion arose over the differences between a fairy story and a legend.
8. Pupils who need additional help or challenge are well supported by teachers and support staff in the classrooms or when withdrawn for specific work. They have individual learning targets and the work is well planned to meet their needs.
9. Teachers are willing to learn new skills and to work together to do this. For example, the subject co-ordinator for information and communication technology runs a weekly workshop for the other teachers if they need any help, as well as sessions to update their knowledge of new software. Teachers are also very well supported by the learning assistants and pupils benefit by their work with them.

The pupils are very keen learners and behave very well; the teachers and other adults provide very positive role models.

10. The pupils are very keen to learn. They settle quickly to their work and demonstrate very good attitudes in all that they do. The youngest pupils were observed coming into the classroom after their lunchtime break, organising themselves and sitting confidently on the carpet waiting for the register to be taken and the work to begin. They responded with interest to the initial discussion and enthusiastically showed a number of treasured items to the rest of the class. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 were checking each other's work in a mature and helpful manner. They used a checklist to identify those aspects of their work that they wanted to improve. The pupils' very clear understanding of the importance of improving their work and their very good attitudes are key features in sustaining the high standards achieved.
11. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. The pupils are polite and show a respect for each other. They are involved with the teacher in producing the codes of behaviour that are displayed in each classroom. These enable the pupils to develop a clear social and

moral awareness. There are very effective routines and expectations and these ensure the high standards of behaviour.

12. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Teachers and other staff are very good role models for the pupils, as are the parents and other adults helping in school. A group of pupils said, “ *the teachers listen to us and respect our views.*” and this was supported by the parents’ views. A School Council has recently been formed and the pupils who are members of it talked with enthusiasm about their new role in helping the school and other pupils. The pupils are asked for their suggestions on how to improve the school.

The parents support their children’s education very well and are very satisfied with the work of the school overall.

13. At the parents’ meeting, one parent said, “ *This is a parent friendly school* ”. Another parent commented, “ *Parents are encouraged to help in school, and welcomed*”. This was endorsed by the meeting. The parents are very supportive of their children’s learning and of the school. They believe that the school is a good one, which does its best for their children. Some help regularly in school and make a good contribution to the pupils’ learning. In most classes parents were involved, for example, one parent was observed confidently working with groups of pupils using a computer. The parents take a keen interest in the work that their children do at home and instil a view of the importance of education. A parent said, “ *We highly value the ‘drop in’ sessions held after school on Thursdays* “. Another said, “ *Any parent at any time with a concern, can approach any member of staff and will receive help and support*“.
14. At the parents’ meeting, and on the returned questionnaires, some parents raised concerns about homework and the activities pupils do outside of lessons. One parent said, “*The homework set is inconsistent and variable between teachers*”. The school has a sound homework policy and has recently held a meeting for parents to discuss this. The pupils appear to have a generally positive attitude towards homework and are aware of its importance. Those pupils spoken to, say that the homework is corrected, and where appropriate, is followed up in the classroom. However, it is important that the school reviews its procedures to ensure that all staff are following them. The school offers a variety of extra-curricular activities, such as, dance, sport, music and information and communication technology. These take place either at lunchtime or after school and for the size of school and age of the pupils these are satisfactory in number and range.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Key Stage 1 pupils need more extended opportunities to develop their skills in using different types of writing in English lessons and in other subjects.

15. The school has identified writing as an area for improvement and this has been included in the school development plan. Key Stage 1 national test results show that whilst standards in English, particularly reading, and mathematics, are well above average, pupils’ writing skills are not reaching the same high standard. This improves in Key Stage 2, where standards in writing are good, and for some very good, by the time that the pupils leave the school. Key Stage 1 results show that most pupils are achieving an acceptable level but that more able pupils are not attaining higher levels.
16. The school has implemented the Literacy Hour effectively and this is helping to raise standards. It has worked hard at improving standards in spelling and this is beginning to have an effect. Good examples of writing are being produced throughout the school and this was

observed in a number of lessons and in samples of pupils' work. However, there are fewer examples of extended pieces of writing in the Key Stage 1 pupils' books and the pupils need more extended opportunities to develop the main features of different types of writing in English lessons and in other subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

18. In order to raise further pupils' standards, the school should now:

- (1) Provide appropriate opportunities for Key Stage 1 pupils to develop the main features of different types of writing in English lessons and in other subjects. by:
 - building upon the good teaching of writing observed;
 - ensuring that writing opportunities are appropriately developed across a range of subjects;
 - providing sufficient time to extend the necessary skills.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	38	63	12	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	163
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs		YR – Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	12	13	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	11
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	25	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (88)	96 (88)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	11
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	25	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	96 (88)	96 (96)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	11	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	8
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	95 (83)	95 (82)	95 (88)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	8
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	95 (82)	95 (82)	95 (88)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	159
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.3
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/9
	£
Total income	229985
Total expenditure	242099
Expenditure per pupil	1670
Balance brought forward from previous year	15191
Balance carried forward to next year	16034

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	163
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	42	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	12	62	21	4	0
The teaching is good.	60	38	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	40	10	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	21	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	27	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	44	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	42	23	0	2