



# The Stonebridge School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 101521  
**LEA** Brent LEA  
**Inspection number** 276530  
**Inspection dates** 12 June 2006 to 13 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Barry Jones AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Shakespeare Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		London
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		NW10 8NG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02089656965
<b>Number on roll</b>	225	<b>Fax number</b>	02088380784
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms Rose Pennells
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Susan Malcolm

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Stonebridge is an inner-city primary school that serves a very disadvantaged community. The great majority of the pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds; the largest group is Somali. About 5% of the pupils have a White British heritage. Consequently, there is a much higher proportion of pupils whose first language is not English than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is much lower than in most schools although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is generally average. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is much lower than in most schools.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

Standards in the school are exceptionally low and many pupils underachieve. The quality of provision and pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage is inadequate. In the school as a whole, teaching and learning and leadership and management are inadequate and this explains the inadequate achievement and standards of the pupils, particularly the average and lower ability pupils. All these inadequacies are recognised by the school. The school judges that it is now effective because it has reacted vigorously to the poor results in 2005 and that the school is now improving. Inspectors disagree, although they recognise that there have been significant improvements in the pupils' behaviour particularly. However, there has been not yet been sufficient impact on raising achievement and too much teaching remains inadequate. A year ago the governing body had many vacancies and was unable to carry out its function effectively. It has since established itself with the appropriate committees and clear roles and responsibilities. The school is in a sound financial position but there is no improvement plan to guide developments over the next few years.

Consequently, in accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. There has been inadequate progress since the previous inspection and value for money is inadequate.

The school is more successful in helping pupils to develop socially and pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. Their moral and social awareness is good and the school is a harmonious community in which different beliefs and religions are respected and celebrated. Behaviour is now satisfactory as a result of recent concerted efforts involving effective working with the school's partners; not all parents are yet convinced, however. The school has a caring ethos but pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities do not progress as they should because the provision has lacked effective leadership until recently.

### What the school should do to improve further

andmiddot; Raise the achievement of all pupils, especially average and lower attaining pupilsandmiddot; Improve the quality of the curriculum and management in the Foundation Stageandmiddot; Ensure that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory across the school and share the best practice more effectively. andmiddot; Devise and implement a school improvement plan.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Standards in the school are exceptionally low, having declined in the last two years. In 2005, in the national assessments in Year 2, only a half of the pupils attained the expected level in reading and writing and no pupil gained the highest grade in any subject. In 2005, in the national tests in Year 6, only one third of the pupils gained the expected grade in mathematics. Even given the very low starting points, these results are below what the pupils should achieve. Consequently, the school missed most of its targets.

Progress is unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage and from Years 1 to 6. In 2005, the progress that Year 6 pupils made from Year 2 to Year 6 was exceptionally low. The poor attendance and bad behaviour of these Year 6 pupils who have now left the school contributed to their poor progress. The school's monitoring shows that many pupils continue to make unsatisfactory progress. The school has recognised that there is too much unsatisfactory teaching and has tackled this issue more rigorously in the last year with some success in Years 1 to 6. Several groups of pupils underachieve including those from minority ethnic backgrounds; boys performed particularly badly in Year 6. Many pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make unsatisfactory progress, sometimes because their needs have not been identified early enough. The more able pupils make sound progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory with strengths in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most pupils are keen to learn and are enthusiastic when they are encouraged to use their initiative. Pupils behave well in lessons and satisfactorily around the school; this is a significant improvement during this year. Their moral and cultural development is good; they respect others' views and cultures and relationships between different groups are harmonious. Bullying rarely occurs and if it does, it is dealt with promptly. One pupil said, 'We had an anti-bullying week. It helped us and the bullying stopped.' Pupils' ability to reflect was very much evident in an assembly where they listened to a story of a family and identified how their lives changed for the better.

Pupils respond well to being given responsibility and make a satisfactory contribution to the community. They volunteer to work with younger children during play time to resolve any conflicts that may occur. They have a voice in improving the school through the school council and they know how to keep safe and healthy. They take part in many sporting activities and the school meals have improved at their request.

Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard to improve the attendance of a small number of pupils who are frequently absent. Pupils are developing sound personal and social skills necessary for adult life but their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and using computers are weak.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 4

The quality of teaching is inconsistent and inadequate overall. The school has established rigorous monitoring procedures in the last year. This does show improvements and one quarter of the teaching is now good but almost one third of the teaching remains inadequate. This is much too high and means that pupils do not make the progress they should, particularly in the Foundation stage. Most of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 is now satisfactory but there is not enough good teaching for pupils to make up ground lost in previous years.

Teachers generally make clear what pupils should learn in lessons and have improved their skills in managing classes. All teachers plan work for different abilities. However, not all do so successfully and pupils' progress is too often unsatisfactory because work is not well matched to their abilities. This is because the school is at an early stage in ensuring that teachers make effective use of assessment data when planning their lessons. Some lessons proceed at too slow a pace and consequently pupils lose interest. There are too few opportunities in some classes for pupils to develop their speaking skills and ability to explain themselves clearly. Teaching assistants give valued support in classrooms but do not give enough attention to developing pupils' language and vocabulary. Marking is done conscientiously but feedback to pupils does not always help them sufficiently to improve their work further.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is unsatisfactory in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils receive too narrow a range of activities and experiences. There are insufficient opportunities for them to talk to adults or to learn through well-planned play. There is a sound curriculum in Years 1 to 6 and it reflects well the cultural diversity of the pupils. Personal, social and health education is taught in separate lessons and in circle times, contributing effectively to pupils' personal development. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to develop their understanding of healthy living and staying safe. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects is developing but has been slowed because of aged equipment and the absence of the coordinator. There are good opportunities to learn music through teaching by a specialist and pupils enjoy a range of visits to museums and art galleries. The school provides several after-school clubs, particularly in sports, and these are well attended. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is developing well, for example, talented pupils receive specialist training from a sports coach.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support. An ethos of care pervades the school and pupils say that they can talk to staff if they have problems. Procedures for child protection are sound. Risk assessments are carried out carefully and health and safety matters are managed well. Pupils' behaviour has improved recently, partly because of the school's success in reducing disruptions in lessons by supporting pupils in its own specialist unit which has good links with outside agencies. This has significantly reduced the need to exclude pupils from school. There is sound support for the few Traveller children in the school.

Guidance and support for pupils has improved this year and is now satisfactory. Support for pupils at early stages of learning English is not rigorous although it is improving. Pupils are aware of their targets for improvement but the teachers do not consistently give the necessary guidance to help them improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate. The school does not have sufficient capacity for further improvement. Initiatives taken by senior managers have not raised achievement sufficiently and too many pupils continue to underachieve. Leaders have been more successful in promoting satisfactory care, but even this work has been hampered by staff absence, some weaknesses in management and insufficient resources to meet the level of need in the school. The school continues to receive substantial support from the local authority and the governing body is not yet effective as a critical friend. The weaknesses in the Foundation Stage are long-standing and many initiatives are at an early stage.

Leadership and management by the headteacher are satisfactory. She has driven improvement initiatives firmly in the last year and has appointed a new senior leadership team which is beginning to have a beneficial impact. The rigorous monitoring of teaching, led by her, has resulted in improvements in Years 1 to 6. A new system for tracking the progress of pupils is accurately identifying pupils' needs. The school is not able to act fully on this information as there are only temporary, non-specialist arrangements for the coordination of support for pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is due to the long-term absence of the key member of staff. Parents are consulted and can contribute to decision making.

When the headteacher started nearly three years ago there was a high financial deficit. She took decisive action to remedy this, and the school is now financially sound. The resources allocated to classrooms were cut significantly and the time allocated to the management of the support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities became insufficient to meet the need. However, staff morale was affected and the school does not operate as a unified team. The school should benefit from increased funding next year. Sensibly, this will be used partly to increase the level of support for pupils.

However, too much of the budget is having to be allocated to cover for high levels of staff absence in addition to long-term absences. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and the school has identified the right priorities but they have not been incorporated into a medium-term plan to indicate priorities for development and how they will be resourced.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	4	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

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

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

### **Pupils**

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school recently. We spoke to some of your school council members and other pupils as a group, in classrooms or around the school. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. Quite a few of your parents expressed concerns about behaviour in the school. However, you told us how much this has improved. We saw for ourselves how well behaved you were in lessons and how attentive you were in the assembly. You are rightly proud that you learn to understand and accept other beliefs and religions. You get on well with one another.

Many of you start with very little English because it is not the language you use at home. We think that these pupils should be helped more to improve so that they can take part fully in school life and learn more in their lessons. The school has had to cut back on its spending in the last three years and that has meant that some other pupils who need extra support have not had it. Many of you are not doing as well as we think you should. You can play your part in improving this by attending regularly, continuing to behave well in lessons and making sure that you work hard in class. If you do not understand something, then make sure you ask the teacher or a support assistant. The teachers are very caring and will help you if they know you have a problem.

The school has been through a difficult time but has much more money available now to use to make improvements. Everyone has a part to play in making sure you do better in your work. We are asking that you make a good start in the nursery and reception classes, that you get good teaching and that the headteacher and her staff devise a plan to make this happen. The governing body should make sure that this is done. For our part, we have said the school requires special measures. This means that the school will receive extra support and other inspectors will visit the school to check on progress.

We wish you every success in the future.

Barry Jones

Lead Inspector