

Stoneygate School

6 London Road, Great Glen, Leicester, LE8 9DJ

Inspection dates 10–12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate school because

- The school does not meet the regulatory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety, and assessing risks. Consequently, the regulations for leadership and management are not met.
- The proprietor has not ensured that procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils reflect the latest national guidance and are implemented. The roles of key staff are not clear.
- The proprietor does not carry out all the checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children in accordance with current requirements.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have not ensured the school's improvement since the last inspection. The leadership of the early years has not been strengthened, as recommended in the last inspection report.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and their attainment is above average. In some areas achievement is outstanding.
- Almost all pupils go on to the secondary schools of their choice; many are successful in Common Entrance examinations or in gaining scholarships.
- School leaders are highly successful in creating a warm and supportive environment for pupils.
- Behaviour is outstanding and a real strength of this school. The conduct of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary.
- All pupils are enthusiastic learners. They concentrate well in lessons, produce written work of a high standard and are keen to make progress.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are highly supportive of each other and display strong levels of mutual respect and self-confidence.
- Teaching is good; all groups of pupils, including those who find learning difficult and the most able, achieve well and make good progress.
- Teachers have high expectations, supporting and challenging pupils to fulfil their potential.
- The outstanding curriculum is characterised by the provision of extensive specialist teaching and opportunities for all pupils to engage in sporting, musical and artistic activities.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with a day's notice.
- Seventeen lessons and an assembly were observed. Inspectors met with senior leaders and the member of staff with designated responsibility for child protection. Meetings were also held with the proprietor and groups of teachers, including those new to the school.
- A range of documentary evidence relating to education and welfare was scrutinised. This included the safeguarding policy, records of behaviour management and risk assessments. Recruitment policies, including the single central register and training certificates, were also reviewed.
- Information relating to students' progress and attainment, as well as evidence of the monitoring of teaching, was also evaluated.
- Pupils' work was examined during lessons and a more detailed scrutiny was made of a sample of pupils' written work. A group of pupils read to the inspectors. Meetings were held with representative pupils. Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection in order to gather their views.
- The views of parents were gathered from the 25 responses to the on-line Parent View survey, and parents interviewed during the inspection. A high proportion of the staff completed the staff questionnaire and their views have also been taken into account.

Inspection team

Richard Johnson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Suha Ahmad

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stoneygate School was founded in 1856. It is a preparatory day school that provides full-time education for 243 boys and girls between the ages of three and 13 years. It prepares its pupils for entry to independent senior schools and almost all transfer at the age of 13 years.
- The school is set in extensive grounds in a rural location to the south of Leicester. It is owned by a sole proprietor, who undertakes its financial management. The day-to-day running and organisation of the school are the responsibility of the headteacher.
- There are 26 children in the early years setting, 17 of whom attend on a part-time basis. Sixteen of these receive government funding for three and four-year-olds. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is in line with that found nationally.
- Pupils come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds that reflect those of the local area. None speaks English as an additional language.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provider.
- The school was last inspected in November 2011, when its quality of education was judged to be good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the safeguarding arrangements for pupils through clear and rigorous procedures that meet regulatory requirements for independent schools and the statutory requirements for the early years by:
 - implementing a safeguarding policy that reflects current guidance in keeping pupils safe
 - clarifying the roles, reporting procedures and status of staff with safeguarding responsibilities
 - conducting all relevant checks to ensure the suitability of staff and recording the outcomes of these appropriately
 - ensuring that the proprietor conducts a thorough annual review of safeguarding procedures.
- Create an adequate management structure for the school that provides sufficient opportunity and expertise to ensure that:
 - the welfare, health and safety needs of the pupils are fully met
 - the school's health and safety policy is comprehensive and implemented rigorously
 - risk assessments are regularly undertaken and any identified risks attended to
 - the leadership of the early years setting is strengthened.
- Raise levels of attainment and progress to outstanding by ensuring that consistently high standards are achieved across all age groups and subjects.
- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that all teachers follow the school's policies for teaching and marking.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- The proprietor ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the Independent School

Standards are met consistently; fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the Independent School Standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

The school must meet the statutory requirements for the early years

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. These should be in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) (paragraph 3.4).

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership of the school is inadequate because safeguarding procedures are not secure; the school has not implemented the latest guidance issued by the Department for Education. As a result, the relevant regulations with regard to safeguarding practice are not met. Additionally, the school's health and safety policy is weak and not rigorously implemented. Consequently, the requirements concerning the leadership duties of the proprietor and school leaders are not met. However, the response of the school to this was prompt and positive, and steps are already underway to address these shortcomings.
- The school has a small leadership structure, comprising the headteacher and his deputy. They are totally committed to their roles and to achieving the best outcomes for the pupils. However, this structure is not adequate to fulfil all the key leadership responsibilities within a school of this size. For example, the headteacher is currently carrying out the role of special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) in addition to his other management responsibilities. As a result, some key aspects of the school's work are not given sufficient oversight.
- The most apparent deficiencies are in the procedures to ensure the safeguarding of pupils. The designated member for staff for child protection does not have a sufficiently senior role in the school, as required by regulations. In addition, the requirements for the leadership and development of the early years setting are not met effectively.
- The school development plan currently focuses on meeting the needs of all pupils in all subjects, with the aim of strengthening both achievement and teaching. Individual subject targets are currently evolving into whole-school objectives. At this moment in time, overall development priorities are unclear.
- The headteacher is improving the quality of teaching through the introduction of a detailed monitoring system, based upon nationally recognised standards, and setting targets for improvement based upon these observations. In some instances, these targets are not sufficiently clear and measurable.
- The school has introduced a new system to measure the attainment and progress of pupils through nationally standardised tests. This enables leaders and teachers to record the progress made by all pupils, and ensures that provision is made for the needs of all groups, so that additional help can be provided for those that require it.
- Leadership is highly successful in achieving outstanding standards of behaviour. Expectations are high and the pupils respond well to this. They are enthusiastic learners. All pupils are known and recognised as individuals. The system of rewards and sanctions is effective and instances of poor behaviour are rare.
- The areas for improvement in the previous inspection report have only been partially met. The school now has a named special educational needs coordinator, and the quality and use of the outdoor areas in the early years setting has improved. The introduction of the new assessment system has provided leaders with more information on pupils' progress, and policies for teaching and learning have been reviewed and developed to a good standard. However, the leadership of the early years setting has not been strengthened effectively and this continues to require improvement.
- The curriculum provided is outstanding. It is well suited to meeting the needs of senior school entry examinations, and places great emphasis on providing a rich and broad educational experience, making effective use of specialist teachers. The curriculum includes excellent provision to promote pupils' personal development.
- Parents indicated high levels of satisfaction with the leadership of the school, particularly with regard to the standards of behaviour and the educational opportunities provided for pupils.
- Staff are proud of their school and the outcomes achieved by the pupils. Responses to the questionnaire were almost all positive. A few commented on the inconsistent application of school policies by a few staff.

■ The governance of the school:

The governance of the school is inadequate. The procedures for the formal review and monitoring of the policies for welfare, health and safety of pupils lack rigour, and the regulatory responsibilities of the proprietor in this respect are not met. There are no formal records of the actions taken to review procedures and to address any issues that arise.

The proprietor is closely involved in the life of the school. He maintains good relationships with all members of staff, giving him a detailed knowledge of the daily routines and regular contact with parents.

The proprietor is well informed about the performance of pupils, and the headteacher regularly provides him with information about the quality of teaching and the outcomes of performance management.

The creation of a new advisory board is planned in the near future to increase the expertise available to support the proprietor in his role, allowing a more informed oversight of the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well in school, are well-mannered and courteous to adults and visitors, and proud of their high standards of behaviour. They enjoy good relationships with their teachers based on strong mutual respect.
- Pupils have an enthusiastic approach to learning, actively supporting one another in group and paired activities. A purposeful atmosphere is apparent in many lessons. This behaviour contributes to their good levels of achievement. There is no poor behaviour during lessons or around the school. Scrutiny of the school's behaviour records indicated no serious instances of poor behaviour. Pupils state that bullying is rare and they are confident that staff would deal with any incidents promptly and effectively.
- Attendance is at a high level and pupils arrive punctually to lessons. They wear their uniforms smartly and show respect for their environment.
- The pastoral support given to pupils is outstanding. In interviews, pupils were unanimous that they could turn to staff for support and help, and that they would deal with any issues that arise sensitively and appropriately.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. Pupils value diversity. They have high levels of knowledge and understanding of other faiths, and show great respect towards them. A girl from a Sikh background was able to share aspects of her faith with her peers, who showed considerable interest.
- Pupils are well-prepared for life in British society, are informed about possible career choices and are developing financial awareness. They show a good understanding of Britain's major institutions and the legal process through such events as a mock trial. Frequent exposure to literature, art and drama develops a strong cultural awareness. Pupils develop an understanding of those less fortunate than themselves through their involvement in a large number of charitable causes. In a school assembly, they showed a reflective and spiritual response in their attentiveness and involvement in prayers.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. The procedures for safeguarding are inadequate and relevant regulations are not met.
- The safeguarding policy is weak and does not meet many of the current requirements. The procedures for referring potential safeguarding incidents to the appropriate authorities are not clear. The review of the safeguarding policy is not carried out effectively by the proprietor. The designated member of staff for safeguarding does not have a sufficiently senior position, as required by regulations.
- The relevant checks to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children are not carried out with all staff, and the single central record of staff appointments was amended during the inspection to address minor administrative errors and omissions.

- The school responded positively to these findings during the inspection and drafted a new policy before the inspection ended. Procedures were clarified with staff and the register of the checks made was amended. The school has yet to implement all the required actions but this process has started.
- The school's procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors require improvement. There are no formal records of hazard monitoring and the relevant school policy is weak. During the inspection a small number of examples of poor health and safety practice were identified. These were all promptly addressed by the school.
- The school has recognised that health and safety processes require strengthening by creating a comprehensive new policy and a health and safety committee, but neither of these had been implemented at the time of the inspection. A risk assessment policy was only developed during the course of the inspection.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. This is confirmed by the comments of their parents and carers.
- Discussions indicated that pupils have a good understanding of risk, including an awareness of cyber bullying and what they need to do to stay safe online.
- Medical provision is good. The school has a matron and a high proportion of staff are first aid trained. Medical facilities and the procedures to store and administer medications meet requirements.
- The site and building are maintained in a good condition, and the school has good security arrangements. Levels of supervision are high, and visitors are carefully recorded and monitored. A scrutiny of maintenance records showed that all plant and electrical equipment is serviced at the appropriate intervals. All the requisite checks on fire equipment and evacuation practices are carried out.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is good and contributes to the good levels of achievement of groups of pupils of all ages and abilities. Teachers have high expectations, supporting and challenging pupils to fulfil their potential.
- Lessons are generally well planned to meet the needs of all learners. The small size of the teaching groups mean that teachers know their pupils well. In a small numbers of lessons, activities to support the weaker pupils and extend the more able are not provided.
- All staff have a strong subject knowledge and the deployment of specialist teachers has a significant impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers share their enthusiasm with their pupils, and use a wide variety of techniques and resources to motivate and engage them in their learning.
- All pupils receive appropriate individual support, both in class and through the use of intervention teaching if required.
- Teaching is enhanced by frequent visits to educational venues, including regular trips to France and outdoor activity centres. These are highly effective in motivating pupils and increasing their teamwork skills. Pupils speak highly of this provision.
- Teachers successfully develop pupils' independent learning skills through project work and research tasks, including those set as homework. Good opportunities to make links between subjects are provided in lessons where this is relevant.
- Homework is generally linked to pupils' current work, and pupils report that it helps them to make further progress and consolidate their previous learning.

- Assessment data are used to track the progress of pupils. During lessons, teachers generally use questioning effectively to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. Many good examples were seen of both open and more probing questioning.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and appropriate points for improvement are usually provided, either verbally or through written comments in their books. A small number of teachers do not follow the school's marking policy in this respect. Pupils commented that they found the use of personal targets helped their learning, but these are not used consistently by all teachers.
- The school's high expectations of presentation are apparent in many pieces of work. Many teachers support the development of high standards of literacy across all academic subjects, especially in spelling and grammar. In a small number of cases, opportunities are missed when these errors are not corrected.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The achievement of all groups of students is good because of effective teaching and the highly positive approach towards learning shown by the pupils.
- The results of standardised testing in numeracy and literacy indicate that both attainment and progress are generally above average across the school. There is some variation between age groups and subjects, and it is this that prevents achievement from being outstanding overall. Leaders recognise this and are committed to addressing this situation.
- In Years 7 and 8, pupils reach outstanding levels of attainment. This is reflected in the successful outcomes in Common Entrance and scholarship examinations.
- Outcomes for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are good overall. The processes for the assessment and support ensure that they make good progress.
- The most-able pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress, and they have gained numerous scholarship awards. In a small number of cases, teaching strategies do not challenge and extend the most-able pupils, limiting their achievement.
- Pupils benefit from and enjoy their many opportunities to read. As a result, many make outstanding progress in developing their reading skills. Pupils demonstrate a good range of learning skills, including those of writing and mathematics. They have highly developed oral communication skills. Pupils' excellent attitudes to learning and their very strong relationships with staff make a significant contribution to their achievement.
- As a result of the specialist teaching staff and facilities provided by the school, standards in languages, particularly French, are high. Pupils also develop a strong understanding of scientific concepts. Their knowledge and understanding of the world in subjects such as geography are above the expectations for their age.
- Achievements in sport, music and extra-curricular activities are outstanding. The school has an excellent record of success in many sports, including rugby, netball and cross-country running. School teams and individual pupils have played at county and even national level. Many pupils play a musical instrument; their results in national music examinations are outstanding and many take part in concerts and other performances. Standards of singing are notably high and the school choir recently reached the final of a national competition.

The early years provision

is inadequate

- The leadership and management of the early years setting is inadequate because the regulatory failures concerning safeguarding also relate to the setting.
- The areas for improvement from the last inspection have only partially been met. The leadership of the

setting has not been strengthened enough to provide a well-informed oversight of the provision and adequate support and guidance for staff. Despite this, individual teaching staff have taken commendable steps to strengthen their professional practice and to identify opportunities to develop their own areas of the setting. The outside areas are now used effectively for learning and are well maintained.

- Children enter at various points of the year, including a group that join in Reception without having attended the Nursery class in the school. This means that their levels of development upon entry vary considerably. Children make good progress from their different starting points. They benefit from good teaching and high standards of pastoral care.
- Relationships in the setting are outstanding because the teachers are highly committed to providing a warm and supportive environment for children. They are excellent role models, and their success in this is reflected in the behaviour of the children in their care.
- Activities, both indoors and outside, are well planned and supervised, characterised by strong interactions between staff and children. High-quality phonics teaching was observed, which was effectively linked to tasks to promote children's emerging writing skills. All staff know the children in their care well. Assessments are carried out conscientiously, recorded in great detail and shared with parents at regular points in the school year. The setting establishes strong links with parents, who were highly positive about the provision. One commented that it was 'like one big family'.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

School details

Unique reference number	120325
Inspection number	454251
DfE registration number	855/6002

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Number of part time pupils	17
Proprietor	Jeremy Josephs
Headteacher	John Morris
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,610–£11,370
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