

# Stoneygate School

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

## Inspection dates

31 January – 2 February 2017

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b>        |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b>        |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b>        |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b>        |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b>        |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Inadequate         |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The proprietor and school leaders have fully addressed the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The school now complies with the independent school standards.
- The quality of teaching is good across the full age range of the school and enables pupils to make good progress with their learning.
- Teachers plan effectively for pupils' learning based on an accurate assessment of their knowledge and understanding of previous work.
- There has been considerable improvement in the early years provision since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is good and children make good progress with their learning and personal development.
- Pupils are successful in gaining scholarships to schools of their choice due to the quality of their academic and personal development.
- Pupils value the opportunities provided by the school. They make an outstanding contribution to the school's positive ethos and respectful relationships. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- Leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and plan effectively to improve and develop provision.
- Leadership and management have ensured a rapid rate of improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher, strongly supported by the proprietors, has established a culture of high expectations and success.
- The school provides a safe environment for pupils. Leaders implement all aspects of safeguarding rigorously, based on a full awareness of statutory requirements.
- Teachers do not develop some aspects of pupils' learning consistently, including: the use of information and communication technology; higher-level learning skills of analysis, evaluation and decision-making; and individual investigation and independent learning in the early years.
- Leaders' evaluation of academic outcomes does not take sufficient account of pupils' progress over time from their various starting points.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of learning and outcomes for pupils to outstanding by:
  - implementing the school's plans to improve pupils' access to information and communication technology
  - ensuring the consistent development across all subjects of pupils' higher-level skills of analysis, evaluation and decision-making
  - improving children's opportunities for investigation and independent learning in the early years, including enhanced use of the outdoor learning area.
- Further develop leaders' evaluation of pupils' outcomes by:
  - fully implementing planned arrangements for baseline assessment of pupils' starting points
  - extending the analysis of progress over time from pupils' starting points
  - setting targets for individual pupils' progress over time compared with national expectations.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that the requirements of all the independent school standards are met.
- There has been a marked improvement in leadership and management since the change of proprietorship during 2016. The trustees take an active part in the continuous oversight of the school and have taken decisive action to address the shortcomings identified at the time of the previous full inspection of the school.
- They have appointed a new headteacher, clarified the responsibilities of staff and raised levels of accountability. High expectations of staff and pupils are evident throughout the school.
- Senior leaders have established a culture of mutual respect based on strong personal relationships throughout the school. There is overwhelming agreement among staff who completed an inspection questionnaire that they are proud to work at the school and that the school is well led and managed.
- Senior leaders have implemented appropriate arrangements for analysis of the school's strengths and have identified appropriate areas for improvement. Procedures for reporting to the trustees ensure that there is a collective awareness of what needs to be done and a shared commitment to improvement.
- Staff appreciate the opportunities provided to take part in regular training, including opportunities to develop their qualifications and expertise.
- Senior leaders promote fundamental British values throughout the curriculum and experiences provided for pupils. Leaders and teachers ensure that all pupils have equality of access to all that the school provides.
- The school provides an excellent curriculum for all pupils, including opportunities for academic success, creative and sporting excellence, and strong personal development.
- Senior leaders and staff have a good understanding of the levels at which pupils are currently working and how their performance may be improved. However, the school's analysis of pupils' outcomes is not sufficiently informed by an analysis of whether individual pupils are making or exceeding expected rates of progress from their various starting points.
- Staff are optimistic about the future development of the school. The trustees and senior leaders demonstrate strong capacity for the further improvement of the school.

### Governance

- The trust has established appropriate arrangements and structures for the leadership and oversight of all aspects of the school's work. They support the school's leaders appropriately and require clear accountability.
- The trust has implemented rapid change which has secured strong leadership and a clear vision for the further development of a successful school. The effective teamwork of the trust's chief executive, the business director and the facilities manager has made a major contribution to the rapid improvement of the school.

- The chair of the trustees has a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas of improvement, based on appropriate arrangements for evaluation and reporting by senior leaders.
- The trustees have wide-ranging and appropriate expertise to drive improvement. They have ambitious plans for the extension of the school's age range and for continuous improvement of the school's facilities.
- The trustees support and ensure that staff are appropriately trained to fulfil their various responsibilities and they oversee effective arrangements for the management of the performance of staff.
- The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the requested material change is implemented.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The trustees and senior leaders have successfully addressed previous shortcomings in the arrangements for safeguarding pupils. They have revised safeguarding policies, trained all staff to the required levels, improved arrangements for the safe recruitment of staff, and assessed and addressed all areas of risk. The safeguarding policy is displayed on the school's website.
- Senior leaders have established appropriate working relationships with external agencies and local authority staff with safeguarding responsibilities. Appropriate arrangements are in place to manage, record and report any issues of concern.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching and learning is at least good across all age groups and subjects. Teachers provide opportunities that enable all pupils to engage positively in successful learning and to enjoy their work.
- Teachers plan appropriate learning tasks and activities based on a good knowledge of the individual learning characteristics of pupils. They demonstrate a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and the ability to communicate in a way that stimulates and interests pupils.
- Staff in a Year 1 lesson provided a good level of challenge to pupils as they matched the sounds and spelling of familiar words. The teacher modelled sounds effectively and used probing questions to check pupils' understanding. Staff supported pupils well with subsequent writing tasks, including emphasising letter formation and requiring children to evaluate the accuracy of their work.
- Staff have high expectations for the conduct of pupils and ensure that their behaviour is appropriate to support productive learning. Pupils respond positively, showing respect for staff and maintaining their concentration throughout lessons. Pupils do not waste time or engage in any distracting behaviour.
- The activities provided for pupils provide good opportunities for the development of their knowledge and understanding. Teachers monitor the work of pupils effectively by asking appropriate questions and suggesting ways in which they can improve their work through oral and written feedback.

- Where learning is most effective, teachers provide challenging opportunities for pupils to think deeply, to reason effectively and to justify their answers. This is particularly evident in mathematics lessons, where pupils develop their understanding of complex procedures and operations through whole-class challenges in which they think imaginatively and justify their answers. Staff do not provide opportunities for pupils to develop higher-level skills of reasoning, analysis and evaluation consistently across the curriculum.
- Teachers maintain a good pace to learning while also providing sufficient time for pupils to reflect and review their learning. They make effective use of homework to extend and reinforce classroom learning. Pupils respond positively to these tasks
- Staff place a consistent emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Pupils in a Year 8 English lesson read aloud accurately and with mostly appropriate expression; they tackled unfamiliar words with confidence. They responded maturely to the opportunity to identify why particular aspects of the text were interesting or successful.
- Pupils are provided with effective opportunities to lead aspects of learning and to demonstrate their recall and understanding of previous work. In a Year 5 physical education lesson, for example, pupils led the warm-up routines. They also reviewed their skills in the use of block tackles, in groups and adapted their approach as the lesson progressed.
- Additional adults in classrooms make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. In an English lesson, for example, a support teacher moved around the room and provided a good level of challenge and support to individual pupils. Occasionally, their role is too passive and not focused sufficiently on addressing identified learning needs.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning progress. There is evidence in pupils' completed work of appropriate advice about how the accuracy of grammar or spelling might be improved, or how pupils might extend or deepen their work. Teachers recognise that pupils are not all working at similar levels and there are some effective examples of different tasks set to provide appropriate challenge for individual pupils.
- Pupils are provided with limited opportunities to extend their learning through individual research, including the use of information and communication technology. Senior leaders have planned appropriately to improve the school's Wi-Fi network infrastructure to broaden access for all pupils.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils display excellent attitudes to their learning; they develop confidence and self-assurance. Staff place a commendable emphasis on the development of these personal attributes.
- Less-confident pupils develop self-assurance because of their trusting relationships with staff. Pupils are supportive of each other and respond positively to the open and caring values of the school.
- Throughout the school, there is an exemplary ethos of caring relationships, mutual

respect and active engagement. Pupils enjoy what they do and are committed to continuous self-improvement. They enjoy challenge and make a strong commitment to effective teamwork.

- Pupils' attendance across the school is high. There are no recorded cases of unauthorised absence.
- Pupils commented on a dramatic recent improvement in the diet provided through school meals. They understand the importance of healthy eating and take this responsibility seriously. They value the outstanding opportunities provided for sports and physical activities; they understand the impact of these activities on their health.
- As a result of comprehensive coverage in the school curriculum, pupils have an excellent awareness of e-safety, road safety, and of the risks associated with substance abuse. Pupil representatives on the school council expressed extremely positive views about the school's commitment to their safety and well-being. They are extremely proud of their school.
- The school makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The school is a community of diverse cultures and backgrounds; pupils demonstrate respect and appreciation for each other and for adults. Staff place a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity and pupils respond positively to the opportunities provided for them.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They enjoy learning and respond with enthusiasm and a positive spirit to challenging learning tasks and activities. In lessons, they focus and concentrate continuously; there are no examples of time-wasting or distracting behaviour.
- Their behaviour in classrooms and around the school is impeccable. They play well together, showing appropriate consideration for each other. They are respectful and helpful to visitors. Behaviour in the dining room is excellent; pupils understand how to queue patiently, to talk appropriately and to treat the environment with respect.
- The excellent curriculum provides pupils with appropriate opportunities to understand the importance of positive relationships and responsible behaviour. School records demonstrate that there are no cases of serious misbehaviour or bullying.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- The school's current assessment system indicates that the attainment of the great majority of pupils is at least in line with the national average for their age and a number exceed the national average. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and they are successful in gaining scholarships to take up places in schools of their choice.
- Pupils make good progress with their learning across all areas of the curriculum, including in English and mathematics. The most able pupils fulfil their potential and demonstrate standards of creative writing, accuracy in grammar and spelling, and mathematical reasoning that prepare them well for the transition to externally examined courses in senior schools.
- The school has recently implemented secure and effective arrangements to recognise and

meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Subject teachers identify any concerns about individual pupils' learning needs and further assessment by specialist learning support teachers is used effectively to prepare individual learning plans for these pupils. Current assessment records indicate that these interventions are having a positive impact on the progress of identified pupils with particular learning needs.

- Staff track pupils' progress carefully from their baseline entry points in Year 1, based on the outcomes recorded in their early years' profiles. Teachers undertake regular assessment of pupils' work throughout key stages 2 and 3. The evidence from these assessments indicates that pupils continue to work at standards appropriate to their age across all year groups and subjects.
- In addition to the good standards achieved in academic subjects, pupils demonstrate excellent achievement in their work in art, music and physical education. During the inspection, for example, a number of pupils represented the school in football and netball fixtures against other schools as part of an extensive calendar of sporting events.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced new arrangements to assess pupils' starting points on entry to the school at any age. They recognise the need to have a more accurate understanding of the levels at which individual pupils are performing at the start of each year. They aim to enable teachers to set more precise progress targets for individual pupils. These new arrangements have not been in place for long enough to provide secure information about the extent of pupils' progress compared with national averages.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The school meets all the statutory requirements for early years provision, including those related to safeguarding. All the independent school standards for this area are met.
- Senior leaders and staff have a clear knowledge of the priorities for implementation based on suitable analysis of assessment information and good knowledge of individual children.
- Staff have a good knowledge of individual children's starting points and they track children's progress thoroughly through evidence in individual learning journals. Staff take part in local authority arrangements for the moderation of children's work in order to ensure that their judgements are accurate.
- Staff maintain good relationships with parents through daily, informed feedback and twice-yearly formal reporting.
- The personal development, behaviour and welfare of children are given a high priority. Staff teach important aspects of personal and social education in the classroom, frequently linked to cultural activities such as the celebration of Diwali or Chinese New Year.
- Staff do not take children's good behaviour for granted; expectations are actively taught, with adults setting high expectations for conduct at the start of each session. These expectations are reinforced regularly throughout the day. Children are polite and well behaved, they listen respectfully and cooperate well from an early age.
- The curriculum and planning for children's learning ensure that children are prepared well

for the transition into Year 1. Arrangements for the admission of children into the early years and for transition to Year 1 are comprehensive and effective.

- The curriculum is stimulating and exciting. The topic-based activities fully embrace essential basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The inspector observed children enthusiastically tackling a variety of activities around the theme of dragons, including mask-making, number and writing.
- Staff teach the use of phonics effectively and reinforce reading skills across the curriculum whenever opportunities arise.
- Children's outcomes in the early years have been inconsistent in the past. They enter the Reception Year with levels broadly in line with national expectations and now make good progress. Recent developments in the provision, including effective leadership, have accelerated the rate of children's progress; current standards are above the national average.
- The indoor learning area is well organised, bright and stimulating; children are encouraged to access resources for themselves and to share responsibility for their learning. The outdoor learning area is not as well developed to contribute fully to children's learning, including opportunities to explore and investigate independently.



## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 120325   |
| DfE registration number | 855/6002 |
| Inspection number       | 10026045 |

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.

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|--|--|
| Type of school                         | Other independent school   |
| School category                        | Independent school   |
| Age range of pupils                    | 4 to 13  |
| Gender of pupils                       | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll    | 145  |
| Proprietor                             | Leicester Grammar School Trust   |
| Chair                                  | Dr Sarah Dauncey   |
| Headteacher                            | John Dobson  |
| Annual fees (day pupils)               | £9,834–12,708  |
| Telephone number                       | 01162 592282   |
| Website                                | <a href="http://www.stoneygateschool.co.uk">www.stoneygateschool.co.uk</a>       |
| Email address                          | <a href="mailto:school@stoneygateschool.co.uk">school@stoneygateschool.co.uk</a> |
| Date of previous standard inspection   | 10–12 March 2015   |
| Date of progress monitoring inspection | 12 October 2016  |

## Information about this school

- Stoneygate School was founded in 1856. It is a preparatory day school that provides full-time education for 145 boys and girls aged between four and 13 years.
- The school is set in extensive grounds in a rural location in south Leicestershire. It is owned by Leicester Grammar School Trust. The transfer of ownership from the previous proprietor took place in May 2016. The trust undertakes the financial management, recruitment of staff and site management of the school. The day-to-day running and organisation of the school are the responsibility of the headteacher.
- There are currently nine children in the early years. None receives government funding for three- and four-year-olds.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with that found nationally.
- Pupils come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. None speaks English as an additional language.
- The school does not use the services of any external provider.
- The school's last standard inspection was in March 2015, when the provision was judged to be inadequate because pupils' safeguarding was not ensured. Following the inspection, the school produced an action plan to demonstrate how the unmet standards would be addressed.
- A progress monitoring inspection was conducted in October 2016 to monitor the progress the school had made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection. The inspection judged that the school met all of the independent school standards that were checked during the inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 16 lessons across the full age range of the school, including the early years. They scrutinised examples of pupils' work in a variety of subjects, including English and mathematics. They also attended a whole-school assembly.
- The inspectors held discussions with representatives of the proprietors, including the chair of governors; the headteacher and senior leaders; and a number of teaching and support staff. They also considered responses to inspection questionnaires submitted by 18 members of staff.
- The inspectors took account of 20 responses to Ofsted's Parent View, questionnaire. They held a meeting with six pupils and discussed the school informally with a number of others.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of school policies, procedures and records in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.
- The Department for Education commissioned Ofsted to consider the school's application for a material change to extend its upper age range to age 16.

## Inspection team

David Young, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Janis Warren

Ofsted Inspector

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