

Inspection of Stratton Church of England Primary School

Thessaly Road, Stratton, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 2NG

Inspection dates: 9–10 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are extremely courteous and polite. They are proud of their school. Inspectors spoke with a few pupils. These pupils represented their school well. They were conscientious and demonstrated maturity when discussing their school. Pupils know one another well, regardless of which class they are in. There is a strong sense of community, and leaders prioritise pupils' safety. Pupils attend well. Absence and persistent absence are low and have been for several years. This is a strong sign that pupils enjoy school.

Pupils gather daily as a school. They join collective worship, 'open the book' assemblies and merit assemblies. These are opportunities for the school community to come together as one. Pupils enjoy these opportunities.

In lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils vary too widely. At times, low-level disruption gets in the way of pupils' learning. There are occasions that pupils take too long to settle at the start of lessons or in between activities. This eats into valuable learning time. Teachers are not addressing this routinely. Where expectations of pupils are lower, pupils' work demonstrates less pride and attention. Pupils themselves recognise that behaviour in lessons needs to improve.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The writing curriculum is not clear. Teachers do not know what to teach and when. Pupils enjoy writing. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to improve their writing. Lessons do not build on pupils' knowledge and often jump from one theme to another. Teachers do not routinely provide pupils with high-quality activities. Inspectors saw examples where activities confused pupils' understanding.

Mathematics is further along than writing. Teachers know what to teach when. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding about number before trying more challenging activities. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They have a secure understanding about how what they are learning links to what has come before or will come next. However, in some classes, teachers' expectations are too low, and this reduces the quality of pupils' work.

Children in the Reception class learn new sounds in phonics well. Staff help them to revisit prior learning, so that they remember what they have learned before. However, phonics teaching in key stage 1 is less effective. Staff are not giving enough thought to lessons or checking how well pupils are getting on. Some pupils who struggle remain unnoticed. There are also occasions where teachers give pupils the answers. In these instances, pupils opt to copy the teachers' work. Books are just about right for the sounds pupils are learning. However, when pupils struggle to read a word, some opt to look for clues in the pictures. This strategy does not help pupils to decode unfamiliar words. Rather than reading the word, they are guessing. As a result, pupils often guess the wrong word. Staff are not routinely discouraging

pupils' use of this strategy.

Curriculum leaders for the foundation subjects are relatively new to their roles. There is more to do to ensure that pupils access a broad and rich curriculum. Currently, leaders' curriculum plans are not implemented well enough. Some subjects are taught less than others. In subjects such as geography and science, pupils acquire knowledge well. They access activities which build well on prior learning. However, these opportunities dramatically reduce when pupils are in upper key stage 2. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not access a broad and balanced curriculum.

Lower-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) often struggle. Pupils with SEND show that they are meeting the specific targets they are working on, over time. However, teachers provide activities for pupils that are far too challenging and beyond pupils' understanding. Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum, and how to adapt it to meet the needs of these pupils, is underdeveloped.

Pupils learn what it means to be healthy well. Pupils told inspectors about the importance of mental health. Pupils feel that staff value them. Pupils know right from wrong and are knowledgeable about the school's Christian values.

Staff are positive about the school community. They were complimentary about the support they have from leaders.

The Reception class sets children up well for future learning. Children settle quickly and follow established routines. Staff are relentless in ensuring that children develop early writing, reading and number knowledge. Staff routinely check on children's progress across the curriculum. This helps them to provide activities that are well matched to children's needs. Some children, often boys, do not access the breadth of the early years curriculum well enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school prioritises pupils' safety before all else. Leaders and governors ensure that recruitment processes are robust. They undertake necessary background checks on staff to ensure that they are appropriate to work with children. Staff have suitable training to help them keep children safe. Staff pass concerns on to leaders without delay. Leaders work well with external agencies to get pupils the right help; this includes securing early help for those that need it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The writing curriculum is not clear. Teachers are not certain what to teach and when. The school has adopted its own approach to teaching writing, but this has not been shared well enough with staff. Lessons jump from one theme to another, often without warning. It is not clear what teachers want pupils to achieve over a series of lessons. Pupils' writing shows little improvement because they are not being taught what they need to know to write well. Leaders need to assure themselves that the national curriculum is met in full and that learning is sequenced so that pupils write well.
- The foundation subjects are a work in progress. Curriculum leaders are relatively new to their roles. As yet, they cannot be sure that their subjects meet the demands of the national curriculum. They need support to ensure that teachers cover the content well. Curriculum leaders' action plans are poor in quality. The plans do not make clear what it is they want to achieve through their actions. Leaders need to ensure that each subject is being taught across the school, so that all pupils learn a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Staff should have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour so that pupils behave well in class. At times, pupils take a long time to settle into their learning. This wastes valuable time and distracts others. Occasionally, pupils do not engage fully in the activities that teachers ask them to complete. Pupils' books lack pride in places. Teachers are not consistently ensuring that pupils complete their best work.
- Pupils with SEND are showing progress against their individual targets. However, pupils find some work hard to access. Teachers need a secure knowledge of the curriculum and ways they can adapt it, so that they can support pupils with SEND to achieve well.
- The teaching of phonics is not effective enough. There are times when staff promote strategies for reading unfamiliar words that are not appropriate. In addition, staff occasionally tell pupils the sounds they are attempting to read. This prevents pupils' progress. In class, staff do not routinely check on pupils' progress. When this happens, they do not notice pupils who are struggling. Leaders should support staff to acquire the skills and knowledge to teach phonics well.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	115615
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10086903
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah John
Headteacher	Ceris Towler
Website	www.stratton.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2006

Information about this school

- The school was previously inspected in September 2006. The school was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is a Church of England primary school. It has close links with St Peter's Church in Stratton.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2014. The governing body has undertaken several changes of late. In recent years, two governance reviews have taken place.
- Classes are organised as one class per year group.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- Inspectors looked closely at reading, writing, mathematics and science during the inspection. Inspectors also looked at how well pupils learn new content in the foundation subjects. This included physical education (PE) and geography.
- Inspectors considered how well the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils,

including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

- Inspectors conducted lesson visits, met with senior leaders and subject leaders, met with class teachers, considered pupils' workbooks and spoke to pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with the school's designated safeguarding leader. He also scrutinised the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered 74 responses to the online survey, Parent View. There were 22 responses to the staff survey. Inspectors sought the views of pupils and staff during the inspection.

Inspection team

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Foulkes

Ofsted Inspector

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

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019