

Inspection of a good school: Stuart Road Primary School

Palmerston Street, Stoke, Plymouth, Devon PL1 5LL

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 November 2021

Outcome

Stuart Road Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils learn what it means to be part of a community at Stuart Road Primary. Leaders make sure that every single pupil feels included. Art is used to bring pupils together. Pupils collaborate on creative projects, both in school and in the local community.

From the outset, pupils develop a love of reading. Staff make every effort to pass on their own enjoyment of reading to pupils. In the Reception class, children gain a rich vocabulary by reading many versions of traditional tales.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They join in enthusiastically. Staff have named a series of robots after the good behaviours they want to see. For example, when pupils complete complex work, teachers remind them of 'Chuuta' the challenge robot.

Pupils have confidence in the way that staff manage behaviour and deal with bullying. Pupils move around the site sensibly. They are well supervised. At lunchtime, the youngest pupils learn how to enjoy traditional games together.

Leaders bring the curriculum to life by inviting interesting visitors into school. For example, as part of the science curriculum, pupils learn how the Earth was formed through interactive demonstrations.

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

Leaders and governors prepare pupils well for secondary school. They prioritise early reading and mathematics. Leaders invest in high-quality staff training and resources in these subjects. As a result, pupils become accurate, fluent readers and keen mathematicians.

Pupils enjoy learning to read. They feel successful, even at the earliest stages of reading, because staff match books well to the sounds that pupils have learned. Leaders make regular checks on how successfully pupils are developing their reading skills. This means

that pupils who need more support are spotted quickly. Staff make best use of time during the school day to help these pupils keep up. When reading is difficult, pupils persist because staff encourage them to keep trying.

All pupils are read to regularly. They benefit from a well-designed reading curriculum. The books read in class complement pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils appreciate how some of the big ideas from the wider curriculum, such as 'identity', can be explored as themes in novels.

In mathematics, the youngest pupils develop their knowledge of number through clear and systematic teaching. All pupils learn the same curriculum content. If pupils struggle, teachers support them to understand there and then. This helps to prevent gaps arising in pupils' knowledge. Older pupils think about how mathematics can lead them into certain careers.

In the wider curriculum, leaders are putting into practice plans that are ambitious. Some subjects are at a more advanced stage than others. Where this is the case, pupils know and remember more as a result. For example, Year 5 pupils gain detailed knowledge of beliefs and religious practices in ancient Egypt. However, in some subjects, leaders have not set out clearly enough what is essential for pupils to know to prepare them for future learning. Furthermore, teachers do not always use assessment well enough to check whether pupils have retained important knowledge over time.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the curriculum well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) encourages each pupil to have a say in how they are supported. Leaders have invested in extra staff and resources, such as a sensory room. This supports pupils and their families successfully with social, emotional and mental health needs. In the Reception Year, there is a strong focus on helping children to develop their speech, language and communication skills.

Lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils concentrate on their learning and understand what is expected of them. Leaders seek out pupils' views on key issues. Pupils vote for their representatives on the student parliament. This helps them to understand and value democracy. Pupils show respect for one another's views and differences, even when they disagree.

Trust leaders have created a partnership between this school and another local school within the trust. This has strengthened both senior leadership and the leadership of the curriculum within the school. Staff welcome the opportunity to collaborate with a wider range of colleagues. This helps them to manage their workload and supports them to tailor the curriculum to better meet the needs of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have the training they need to look after pupils' emotional and physical well-being. Staff are vigilant and quick to report any concerns.

Sometimes pupils do not attend school due to circumstances in their personal lives. When this happens, leaders take steps to respond to their needs. This allays pupils' fears. Pupils feel happy and safe in school as a result.

All adults working within the school are appropriately vetted. Leaders assess any risks to pupils carefully. They keep detailed records which help them to safeguard pupils. Leaders readily involve external professionals when appropriate to help children and families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not identified the most important knowledge for pupils to learn in some subjects. As a result, teachers and pupils are not fully clear what they should focus on. Leaders should clearly identify the knowledge they intend pupils to remember in the long term, in each subject.
- Leaders have not yet agreed how they will check that pupils have learned the curriculum in some subjects. Therefore, leaders are not clear whether pupils recall and use knowledge as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that assessment is used effectively to help pupils to embed knowledge fluently in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Stuart Road Primary, to be good in March 2017.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the school and you are 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	144844
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10200938
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Marcus Agius
Executive Headteacher	James Gentile
Headteacher	Britta Nicholls
Website	www.stuartroad.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, and the proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans, is below the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school became an academy on 1 July 2017. The predecessor school was also called Stuart Road Primary School.
- The school is part of the REACH South multi-academy trust. The trust comprises 14 schools, including 10 primary schools.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the head of school, the executive headteacher, the director and deputy director of education from the multi-academy trust, and the school's SENCo.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders and pupils about several other subjects.
- To gather evidence about the school's work to safeguard pupils, the inspector scrutinised policies and the single central record of adults working within the school, held discussions with leaders, including the designated safeguarding lead, and spoke to staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with leaders to discuss the provision for pupils in the early years foundation stage.
- The inspector considered 32 responses to the online questionnaire Ofsted Parent View, including 9 free-text responses. In addition, the inspector took into account 50 responses to the questionnaire for pupils and 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lydia Pride, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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