

Inspection of an outstanding school: Stanton School

Bradville, Fairfax, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK13 7BE

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 December 2021

Outcome

Stanton School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, staff and parents are extremely proud of their school. They describe Stanton as, 'one big happy family'. Pupils take great delight in their learning. They understand the extremely high standards expected in all areas of school life. Pupils rise to these confidently.

The school's 'PROUD' rules breathe into every part of daily life. Pupils are very happy, self-assured and feel safe. They cannot recall any incidents of bullying. One pupil said, 'Staff look out for us at all times and deal with any problems quickly.'

Pupils have a deep understanding of fundamental British values. They debate topics such as mutual respect, protected characteristics and individual liberty maturely. One pupil said, 'Although we are all different and make different choices, we are all equally important and unique.'

Pupils thrive at Stanton. Classrooms buzz with lively and interesting discussions. One pupil told the inspector that, 'Each day is another amazing opportunity for interesting new learning.' Pupils immerse themselves in the wide range of after-school clubs, such as tap dancing, gardening, healthy lifestyle and multi-sports clubs. They showcase their talents by entering arts competitions, participating in sports tournaments and singing at national events.

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

Leaders, governors and staff are providing an excellent education and exemplary opportunities for all pupils. Without question, leaders want all pupils to gain essential knowledge and skills to prepare them well for their future. Subject leaders carry out their roles and monitor their subjects very successfully. There is an extraordinary spirit of teamwork and collaboration among staff. Governors have high expectations of school leaders. They have a firm understanding of the school's work because they ask leaders probing questions, visit the school and ensure that they are extremely well informed.

The school's curriculum is inspiring, highly engaging and superbly well designed. In all subjects and year groups, teachers ensure pupils learn and clearly understand the essential knowledge and technical vocabulary in each subject. New work builds perfectly on earlier work and teachers are always thinking ahead to what needs to be taught next. Staff continually embed the important knowledge that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should learn and remember. As a result, pupils confidently use and apply their ideas to learn and do more in the curriculum. Pupils achieve highly.

Staff have expert subject knowledge. They use their effective training to ensure that all pupils get the same learning opportunities, regardless of their needs. Teachers continually check what pupils can remember and provide challenge when this is needed. They efficiently include any important learning that pupils may have missed as a result of COVID-19. Pupils with SEND get the right support and resources at every stage of their learning. Consequently, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. One pupil said, 'Staff make sure that we lock the learning in our heads so it will stay with us for life.'

Leaders prioritise reading. The phonics programme is well structured and expertly delivered. Staff systematically check which sounds pupils know. They skilfully provide daily support for those who struggle. Teachers make sure that the books pupils read match the sounds they learn. As a result, pupils are fluent and avid readers. They talk passionately about the books that they read. Pupils look forward to visiting the well stocked, vibrant library. One pupil told the inspector, 'We just love to dive into books.'

Leaders make sure that pupils' personal development is of a high standard. Pupils take part in an excellent range of trips and visits. For instance, pupils visit different places of worship and historical sites to learn about their community and local heritage. Pupils talk animatedly about their virtual trips to museums, the theatre and art galleries. They also take pleasure in looking after their school. They enjoy planting flowers around school. Pupils are proud of the role they play as school councillors, playtime buddies, junior librarians and classroom monitors. These roles enable pupils to contribute to school life.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong and well-established culture of safeguarding at Stanton. Keeping pupils safe is at the heart of the school's work. All safer recruitment checks are carried out when appointing staff to ensure they are suitable to work with pupils. Training records are stringent and well organised. Staff are vigilant and know how to raise and report concerns. Information is shared promptly with the right agencies to make sure that pupils at risk are protected and well supported.

Pupils can confidently explain how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 school to be outstanding in March 2016.

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	110365
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10211922
Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anne Slee
Headteacher	Helen Nicholson (Executive Headteacher)
Website	http://www.stantonschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 – 3 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with the nearby Pepper Hill School. The two schools share an executive headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body.
- At the time of this inspection, the school was using an alternative provider.

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 held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, senior leaders and staff.
- The inspector evaluated the quality of education by looking in detail at the teaching of early reading, mathematics and geography. The inspector discussed curriculum design with leaders, carried out lesson visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers from the lessons visited.

- The inspector evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. The inspector reviewed the school's single central record. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and spoke to pupils, staff and parents.
- The inspector met with two governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered the views of members of staff who responded to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- The inspector took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text comments. The inspector met with several parents during the inspection.
- The inspector met with pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally about the school.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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