

Inspection of Stanford Infant School

Highcroft Villas, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 5PS

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents, staff and pupils are rightfully proud to be part of the Stanford Infants School community. Pupils feel safe and happy because they know staff care for them and listen to them. Staff are fully committed to developing well-rounded individuals who are confident to face challenges and try their best in all that they do. As one parent said, 'The teachers and leaders know my children well and support them to be the most courageous and kind they can be.'

Pupils eagerly discuss what they have been doing in their lessons and are keen to share their successes. They enjoy lots of opportunities to explore books within school, including selecting a book from the 'Top 60' to read during the morning 'Book Browse'. Equally, pupils enjoy participating in wider curriculum opportunities, including forest school and also beyond school, including 'Let's Dance at the Dome!'

Staff have clear expectations for behaviour and pupils understand the school routines in place. Pupils respond positively to instructions and respond well to adults and their peers. They know what bullying is and are confident that it is dealt with quickly by adults. They also enjoy taking on positions of responsibility, including as school council members and being a 'buddy'.

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

Leaders are ambitious and united in their commitment to the school. Pupils are taught to read as soon as they arrive at school in Reception. Children enjoy being read to and take pride in demonstrating their own reading. A keen interest in books and stories begins during these early stages. In all year groups, pupils have many opportunities to read regularly and widely. Most pupils quickly become fluent readers and those who do not are well supported at school by knowledgeable adults. Leaders acknowledge the provision for early reading can be further developed by ensuring that all pupils are accessing appropriate opportunities to read in school and at home.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are well supported by committed and skilled teaching assistants. Together, they help pupils to develop their understanding of increasingly complex knowledge in many subjects. In some subjects, including mathematics and physical education, leaders have clearly outlined what pupils need to know and be able to do in order to be successful. The order in which pupils learn this important content builds appropriately over time. However, in some other subjects, the key knowledge pupils should learn is not clearly planned out. Therefore, some activities designed to build and refine pupils' knowledge are not always having the desired impact. Leaders acknowledge that planned lesson activities need to be more consistently matched to what pupils need to know and remember.

The approaches to check what pupils know and can do provide staff with useful information to inform their teaching in reading and mathematics. However, in some other subjects, including design and technology, approaches to identify misconceptions and gaps in knowledge are at an earlier stage of development.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported by knowledgeable adults to access and achieve well within the curriculum. Leaders monitor pupils with SEND carefully and use this information to adapt classroom support and interventions appropriately.

Within the curriculum, pupils are taught important knowledge about individual differences, inclusivity and safety. This content is sensitively taught and provides lots of opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and ask important questions. Beyond the taught curriculum, all pupils are invited and supported to attend a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, including musical theatre and different sports clubs.

Pupils behave well. Teachers help them to develop positive attitudes to learning and, from the earliest age, work independently. Pupils settle quickly into established routines and most pupils manage their behaviour effectively. They take pride in their learning and enjoy their time playing with friends.

Staff and governors are ambitious for all pupils and fully focused on ensuring that they receive a high-quality education. Staff feel well supported and valued as part of this whole school vision. Leaders take the well-being and professional development of their staff seriously. Despite the challenges of the pandemic and its continued impacts, a passion to provide the best opportunities for pupils is present at all levels throughout the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have strong systems in place to support a positive culture of safeguarding. Leaders work closely with families, when appropriate, if they have concerns about particular pupils. They also work closely with external agencies to ensure that all pupils receive the support they need.

Staff are kept up to date with appropriate and necessary training. They demonstrate a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and they are alert to any signs that pupils might be at risk of harm. The school's curriculum also includes important knowledge about how to stay safe and communicate any concerns that pupils might have. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to them if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of early reading is effective. However, the books that some pupils take home and some activities in school are not always closely focused on supporting them to become more confident and fluent readers. This means that some pupils are missing valuable opportunities to practise the sounds that they know and receive feedback to improve. Leaders need to ensure that every opportunity is taken to ensure all pupils receive appropriate and specific practice in reading both at school and at home.
- In a few foundation subjects that have not been precisely sequenced, pupils do not always get sufficient and coherently planned opportunities to consolidate their learning. This means that pupils are not learning in these subjects as well as they might. Leaders need to ensure that pupils are given more opportunities to practise what they have learned. This will help to ensure that they know and remember more of the intended curriculum.

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	114377
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10199373
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs of governing body	Tess Gill and Catrin Pinheiro Torres
Headteacher	Madeleine Denyer
Website	www.stanfordinfants.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 February 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation including the school's development plan and relevant school policies.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders and a range of phase leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with members of the local governing body and a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, physical education, and design and technology. This involved inspectors talking to subject leaders, class teachers and pupils, visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and listening to pupils read. Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation for the teaching of history and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- As part of inspecting early years, inspectors met with the early years leader and made visits to the Reception classes.
- Inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising relevant documentation, staff recruitment checks and training records. Case files were also sampled to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed by 25 staff and 89 pupils through survey responses. They also took account of 86 parents, including 36 free text comments through Ofsted online surveys.

Inspection team

Hanna Miller, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Keay

Her Majesty's Inspector

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