

Inspection of a good school: The Stoke Poges School

Rogers Lane, Stoke Poges, Slough, Buckinghamshire SL2 4LN

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Stoke Poges School. They appreciate how staff support and listen to them. This makes them feel safe and confident. Pupils are helped to understand the school values, including resilience and kindness. As one pupil commented, 'We learn to treat others as we wish to be treated.'

Leaders and staff are determined for pupils to achieve well. This ambition ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), get off to a strong start in reading. However, some pupils do not learn consistently well, for example in mathematics.

Pupils are helped to learn the school rules of 'be ready, be respectful, be safe'. As a result, they behave calmly and play kindly together at playtimes. Bullying does happen occasionally, but pupils are confident to ask for help if they have a worry about unkind behaviour. Leaders are quick to address concerns, and do so effectively.

Pupils thrive on the range of interesting opportunities. They sing with heartwarming joy in the popular choir, which is one of many clubs available. Pupils learn new skills and contribute to their local community through the 'Junior Challenge' project. They enjoy different trips to enrich their learning, including visiting Windsor Castle.

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

Leaders' work to promote pupils' wider development is a strength of the school. This starts in Reception, when children are encouraged to take turns and work together, for example when using building equipment outside. Older pupils are proud of their leadership positions, such as being team captains, which enable them to contribute positively to the school community. Staff teach pupils the importance of equality and

pupils believe that everyone should be treated with the same respect. As one pupil commented, 'It does not matter what you look like, we are all the same underneath.'

Staff foster a genuine love of reading in pupils from the very start of Reception. Teachers routinely read aloud a range of interesting texts. This exposes pupils to vocabulary they might not come across when reading independently. Leaders also provide valuable guidance to parents about how to read with their child at home.

The teaching of reading is highly effective. Leaders provide continuous high-quality training to ensure that staff are equipped with expert knowledge. This helps staff to follow the phonics scheme closely. Teachers keep a close check on how well pupils are learning. If pupils fall behind, they are given beneficial support to help them to keep up. Pupils practise their skills by reading books that are accurately matched to the sounds they have learned. Consequently, pupils are helped to get off to a consistently positive start in learning to read.

The teaching of mathematics is less well developed. Leaders have worked with staff to create a carefully sequenced curriculum that sets out what pupils should learn and when. However, some teachers do not check what pupils know and can do before starting a new unit. The support for pupils with SEND is inconsistent. As a result, some pupils find lessons too easy or too hard and so do not learn as well as they could. In Reception, staff use different resources effectively to promote children's learning. Leaders are keen to extend this stronger practice into lessons with older pupils.

Leaders have supported staff to sequence the curriculum in wider subjects. Curriculum thinking identified the key content that staff intend pupils to understand. Leaders are continuing to refine this work because teachers do not consistently emphasise the most important concepts or revisit key ideas to help pupils connect and remember new learning. As a result, some pupils' learning is variable.

Leaders have created a positive environment so that pupils can focus on their learning. Lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour. Some pupils do occasionally disengage if staff have not thought carefully enough about what they need to learn. Overall, pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning.

Governors and leaders consider staff's workload carefully. Teachers appreciate the recent changes to the marking policy so that the feedback they provide to pupils is more purposeful. Governors understand their role and know the strengths of the school. Following the pandemic, they have plans to restart visits to further support and challenge leaders to address aspects of the school that require strengthening.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know they need to be vigilant for any signs that a child may be at risk from harm. They report even the smallest concerns promptly. Leaders work with external agencies to help pupils get timely help.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. They benefit from visits from the police and fire service to help them understand how to stay safe in the community. Pupils' well-being is promoted well. Leaders have recently appointed extra staff to support this effectively.

Leaders ensure that the required pre-employment checks are made before adults start working or volunteering at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of mathematics is variable. This means that some pupils, including those with SEND, do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff use the school's agreed approaches to teach mathematics. This includes carefully checking what pupils know and can do and staff then using this information to inform their teaching. They should also make sure that pupils with SEND have the support they require to achieve well.
- Leaders have set out the knowledge that they want pupils to learn in wider subjects, but some teachers do not consistently emphasise the most important concepts or revisit key ideas to help pupils connect and remember new learning. As a result, some pupils' learning is variable. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the understanding and confidence to deliver each subject as intended.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2012.

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.

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	130328
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10242043
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ed Bramley-Harker
Headteacher	Liz Astley
Website	www.stokepoges.school
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- About half of the staff have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The chair of governors started in his role in September 2018 and most governors have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The school uses one provider of registered alternative provision.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other school staff.
- The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector spoke with staff and pupils. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review their knowledge, records and actions. The inspector also looked at safeguarding records and actions and reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff.
- To make wider judgements, the inspector spoke to staff and groups of pupils from different year groups and observed behaviour in classrooms and at lunchtime.
- The views of staff and pupils, including responses to Ofsted's online staff survey, were considered.
- Parents' and carers' responses to Ofsted Parent View, including written responses, were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Laurie Anderson, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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 2022