

Inspection of a good school: St Nicholas C of E Primary School, Henstridge

Ash Walk, Henstridge, Templecombe, Somerset BA8 0QD

Inspection dates:

29 November 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 at St Nicholas Henstridge are proud of their school. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Pupils feel safe because they know staff will listen to them if they have a worry. A typical comment from pupils is 'every adult in our school is a trusted adult.' Parents find staff to be approachable, supportive and understanding.

Leaders share an ambitious vision for pupils. However, the curriculum is not yet set out with enough precision. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Pupils speak knowledgably about the school rules and values. They develop their talents and interests through attending clubs, such as dance, sports, chess and art. Leaders give pupils a voice through the school council and eco-committee. Pupils enjoy taking part in community events, such as the festival of lights.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is mostly positive. Staff have clear expectations of behaviour. Most pupils say that bullying is rare. Staff take swift action when incidents are reported. However, some parents remain unhappy with the response of leaders following concerns about bullying.

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

Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to teaching early reading and phonics. It is starting to help pupils in the early years to read fluently and confidently. The youngest pupils enjoy reading books that closely match the sounds they know. However, some staff do not understand the phonics programme well enough. They do not provide effective support for pupils who are struggling to read. Many older pupils have gaps in their phonic knowledge. Leaders have not yet put in place the support some older pupils need to catch up quickly with their reading. Older pupils enjoy the books that teachers

choose to read and discuss with them. However, the range of books that pupils read for themselves is limited.

In mathematics, teachers explain new ideas carefully and make sure that pupils are using the correct vocabulary. They regularly check pupils' understanding. Children in the early years learn important facts about numbers, to make sure they are ready for their later learning. However, some older pupils are unsure about key number facts. This stops them from learning the curriculum as well as they could. In addition, pupils are not given enough opportunity to practise problem-solving.

Leaders have begun to identify the precise knowledge and skills that pupils should gain in the other curriculum subjects, including in the early years. They have not yet ensured that teachers have this information to shape how pupils will learn the curriculum. As a result, in many subjects, pupils do not know and remember their learning because they do not build knowledge well enough. Teachers are beginning to use assessment to understand what pupils know and remember.

After a period of turbulence, there is now a consistent approach to the support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive. Teachers make adaptations for pupils with SEND in their classrooms, such as providing specialist resources and short movement breaks. They set learning targets for pupils and evaluate them regularly. However, some targets for pupils with SEND are too broad to be helpful to them.

Leaders prioritise pupils' social, emotional and mental health. Well-trained staff work skilfully with individuals and groups of pupils to help them to understand their emotions. Pupils talk thoughtfully about healthy relationships. Older pupils appreciate the carefully chosen books that have been provided to help their learning about different types of relationships.

Staff feel respected and valued. Leaders, including governors, consider staff workload and well-being when making decisions about the school. Staff are committed to making the necessary improvements. Governors receive accurate information about the quality of education that pupils receive. They are starting to check that leaders' actions impact how pupils learn the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive suitable safeguarding training. Staff know how to identify and report concerns. Leaders respond to concerns quickly. There are some gaps in the details of record-keeping. Leaders know they must address these.

Leaders work well with other agencies to secure support for pupils and families. Careful checks are made to ensure that adults who work in school are safe. Governors receive clear information about safeguarding.

Pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The reading curriculum is in the early stages of implementation. Some members of staff do not have the knowledge they need to deliver the phonics programme well enough. Arrangements to help older pupils who struggle with their reading are not in place. This means that some pupils are not progressing through the reading curriculum as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff understand the phonics programme well enough. This will help them to provide effective support for pupils who fall behind with their reading.
- In mathematics, some older pupils are unsure about key number facts. They are not given enough opportunity to practise problem-solving. This stops them from learning the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders need to identify and address the gaps in pupils' knowledge. They also need to provide pupils with enough opportunities to use their knowledge to solve problems with confidence.
- Leaders have not defined and communicated the precise knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember in each subject. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that they identify the important knowledge that they want all pupils to know and remember in each subject.
- Some pupils with SEND have targets that are too broad to be helpful to them. Pupils do not learn well because their targets lack precision. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils with SEND have suitable learning targets that help them to know and remember more.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good on 11–12 January 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.

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	123760
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10211166
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Adam Wilson
Headteacher	Alison Shearer
Website	www.stnicholashenstridge.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is voluntary controlled and is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in April 2016.
- The school provides a breakfast club each morning.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the headteacher, groups of staff and representatives from the governing body. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

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

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in other subjects with leaders.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors looked at how the school keeps pupils safe. They considered how well the safeguarding leads act upon concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. The lead inspector also scrutinised the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered 42 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 25 free-text comments, and 14 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jonathan Gower, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Marcia Northeast

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