

Inspection of a good school: Stoke Primary School

Briton Road, Coventry, West Midlands CV2 4LF

Inspection dates:

13 to 14 December 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. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Stoke Primary School is a warm, caring and welcoming school. Pupils know and embody the five 'STOKE' values of being solution focused, truthful, optimistic, kind and empathetic. They happily attend each day and enjoy working with each other and staff. Pupils are eager to talk about their learning and their school. They are proud members of the school community. Leaders provide pupils with a broad range of opportunities to nurture their interests, broaden their horizons and learn about the wider world. These range from chocolate club to zorbing club and from trips to see a ballet and pantomime.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and want the very best for pupils. Pupils know what staff expect of them and work hard. Classrooms are purposeful and productive places, full of enthusiastic pupils and dedicated staff. Pupils do not worry about bullying. They trust adults to step in and put things right if anyone is unkind to them.

Leaders know that the quality of education pupils receive needs to improve. They have a clear understanding of where the strengths and areas for development lie. New staff appointments have provided the impetus needed. While there is much to do, leaders have made substantial improvements in a short time.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Staff share a collective vision and have created an inclusive ethos. Leaders listen to staff and consider their well-being and workload. The whole school is founded firmly on high levels of mutual respect and care, and everyone is valued and appreciated. Teachers do not need to worry about low-level disruption in lessons. They can concentrate on teaching the curriculum. Staff and pupils look forward to coming to school each day and are embracing change.

Certain aspects of the curriculum are weak. There have been significant leadership changes in a bid to address this. At a senior level, leaders are driving change, and this is gathering pace. Subject leaders are equally determined and committed. However, some new subject leaders lack the in-depth understanding of the subjects they lead. The curriculum in some subjects lacks detail. Teachers have an overview of what pupils need to learn and the order in which they should teach it. However, leaders have not identified the important building blocks of knowledge that pupils need to know and remember at each stage of their learning. It is, therefore, up to teachers to interpret the broad aims without a clear understanding of what pupils should already know. Teachers do this creatively and this does help pupils learn. However, ultimately pupils learn new knowledge in isolation, without making secure connections to what they already know within the subject.

Leaders introduced a new phonics programme at the beginning of the academic year. This is because too many pupils do not gain the knowledge and skills needed to become fluent readers. Staff have welcomed the change in approach and leaders have managed this effectively. Staff work hard to deliver the new programme well and there is evidence of its emerging impact. However, it is not fully embedded or being delivered with a high level of consistency. Too many pupils still have gaps in their phonics knowledge and there remains much to do.

Leaders have only recently begun to develop older pupils' love of reading. They have introduced whole-class reading sessions. Pupils enjoy reading these stories with their teachers. This is beginning to open their eyes to the pleasure of reading. However, too few pupils read for enjoyment and the range of texts they read is too narrow.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They share information with staff, talk to pupils and consult with parents. Teachers use this information well to support pupils with SEND. Leaders consider how any additional support can best be used to help pupils. This contributes to the strong inclusive school culture.

Children in early years get a good start to their education. Leaders plan activities for children that build on what they already know. Staff focus on developing children's language and vocabulary by encouraging them to 'add a bit more' when they speak. Children begin learning phonics promptly in Reception. As a result of leaders' actions in the early years, children are well prepared for key stage 1.

Leaders have planned a quality curriculum that goes beyond the academic. This ranges from sports coaches running daily lunchtime activities to visitors talking to pupils about knife crime. Pupils contribute to school life through means such as the school council and the 'house system'. This helps pupils shape their school and enables them to work with other pupils of all ages.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong safeguarding culture in the school. All staff have completed relevant training. Leaders revisit this regularly at staff briefings to reinforce the importance of keeping pupils safe. Staff understand that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. They know pupils well and are alert to any sign that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff report concerns immediately, and leaders act promptly on the information shared with them.

Safeguarding leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure that pupils and families get the help and support they need. They take the time to get to know families so that they can adapt the support offered to reflect any change in circumstance.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Many subject leaders are new in post and have limited experience of leading subjects in a primary school. Many are at an early stage of development in terms of their leadership skills and curricular expertise. This means that they do not have sufficient knowledge of high-quality curricular design in their subject area. Leaders should ensure that they harness the enthusiasm and dedication of staff to develop and grow subject leaders across the curriculum so that they can all lead their subjects effectively.
- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils learn to read well. As a result, too many pupils have significant gaps in their phonics knowledge and need additional help to catch up. Leaders should ensure that all aspects of the new phonics programme are implemented consistently well.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum in all subjects clearly sets out the detail of what pupils need to know and remember at each stage of their learning. As a result, in some subjects, teachers do not know the precise detail of what pupils have learned before, the important knowledge they should be teaching and how this will equip pupils for future learning. Leaders should ensure that they build on the work that has already taken place so that teachers know the important building blocks of learning that pupils need to know and remember at each stage of their learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils are developing a love of reading. As a result, some pupils do not read a broad range of texts. This means that they miss out on the enjoyment, personal reward and broadened horizons that can be gained from a 'good book'. Leaders should ensure that recent work to develop a stronger reading culture across the whole school continues to grow so that pupils are enthused by reading and read widely and often.

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 in October 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.

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	103679
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10200169
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Bill Gallagher
Headteacher	Matthew Ascroft
Website	www.stoke.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 October 2016

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone significant changes in leadership and governance.
- The school does not use any 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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector held discussions with members of the local governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, he 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.

- The inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities with leaders.
- The inspector met with members of staff and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection. He took account of responses to a staff and pupil survey, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector looked at records and spoke to staff in relation to behaviour, bullying and safeguarding.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with safeguarding leaders.

Inspection team

Ian Tustian, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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