

Inspection of a good school: Stoke Mandeville Combined School

Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP22 5XA

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 February 2023

Outcome

Stoke Mandeville Combined School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at this school and say they feel happy and safe. The school creates a fully inclusive environment where all pupils are cared for. The pupils understand the '5Rs' of respect, reflection, responsibility, resilience and resourcefulness. They demonstrate these in their conduct around the school. Pupils were right to express that this is a kind and caring school.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils and what can be achieved. Leaders are passionate about creating an inclusive school where every child is valued and supported.

Behaviour around the school is calm and orderly and pupils are respectful of each other. At lunchtimes pupils are active and engage well with each other. Pupils know who to go to if they need help or support during the day. Relationships are warm and caring between adults and pupils. Pupils say bullying is rare but feel confident staff would deal with it quickly if it did occur.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are truly included in school life. The school has a hearing resource provision and all pupils across the school are taught signing. Pupils sing and sign together and this is celebrated across the school. There is a singing and signing choir which performs around the community.

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

Leaders are passionate about providing the best curriculum they can for pupils. The subject leaders are knowledgeable and clear about the curriculum they want for pupils. Their planning and teaching for some curriculum areas are more developed than for others. However, leaders are clear what their next steps are. In science and mathematics, leaders have implemented an effective curriculum which builds on existing knowledge and skills well. Outcomes in key stage 2 mathematics assessments last year were lower than expected. Leaders have acted quickly to ensure fluency of basic mathematics skills is in

place. Pupils are clear this helps them to remember more. Leaders are continually adapting their curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils.

Pupils in this school love to read. From the moment children start in Reception class their phonic journey begins. The phonics programme is well structured, and children are quick to learn new sounds. Books are appropriately matched for each phonic stage and children can blend sounds accurately. Teachers support pupils quickly if they need additional help and ensure any misconceptions are addressed promptly. One pupil said that 'books help their imagination escape to different worlds'. Where possible, links are made across the curriculum to quality stories and texts to support learning.

From Reception through to Year 6 there is a high level of engagement in lessons. Children in Reception actively select and work on a range of tasks. In the rest of the school pupils continue to work well and on task. Pupils enjoy the practical elements of learning and can focus quickly on the activity in hand. The behaviours for learning are strong and pupils participate well in the classroom.

Pupils enjoy the wide opportunities available to them. The clubs and visits the school offer enrich pupils' broader development. Leaders celebrate the achievements of pupils in assemblies and recognise the work produced in class over the week. This leads to an invitation to hot chocolate with the headteacher, which pupils love.

Pupils with SEND are quickly identified and fully included in all aspects of school life. The school also has a mainstream resource provision for pupils who are deaf. All pupils with SEND or from the resource provision are well supported in class. They access a range of intervention and support to enable them to study the full curriculum.

Staff feel well supported by leaders regarding their workload. The well-being committee is highly valued. All staff enjoy working at the school and benefit from a range of professional development opportunities. Governors are aware of their statutory duties and understand the needs of the school and its place within the community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a robust safeguarding culture. They have clear systems and detailed records for reporting of concerns. Records are comprehensive and follow-up actions are made where appropriate. The staff know the pupils well and pupils feel confident to share their worries with the staff. Staff receive the appropriate training, and they know the signs of concern to be alert to. Staff are briefed weekly on any changes in guidance or trends to be aware of. Pupils have a good understanding of online safety and how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans in foundation subjects are at different stages of implementation and development. As a result, pupils do not remember key knowledge and vocabulary in some subjects as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is fully embedded and monitored so that pupils remember more over time.

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 January 2018.

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	110249
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10256529
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Robert Buttery
Headteacher	Eileen Stewart
Website	https://www.stokemandeville.bucks.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a play club before and after school.
- The school operates a resource provision for pupils who are deaf. There are currently five pupils accessing this provision.
- The school accesses one 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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, resourced provision lead, subject leaders, teachers and governors.
- The inspector also spoke to a representative of Buckinghamshire local authority and an external provider which the school uses.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and science, as well as taking a broader look at music, art and geography. During the deep dives the inspector spoke with leaders, visited lessons, looked at books and spoke with pupils.

Inspection team

Simon Woodbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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