

Inspection of Stickney Church of England Primary School

Main Road, Stickney, Boston, Lincolnshire PE22 8AX

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Respect, fairness, honesty, forgiveness, kindness and trust are at the heart of Stickney C of E Primary School (Stickney). Pupils know these values well. They develop a deep understanding of what they mean. For instance, Year 6 pupils told inspectors, 'We need to show respect, but we must expect it too. It goes both ways.'

Stickney is a friendly, inclusive school. Pupils feel part of a community. One pupil, whose comment was typical of many, said, 'You feel welcome here and that makes me feel safe.'

Pupils behave well. They are polite and cheerful. Pupils find it is easy to concentrate in lessons. They know what it means to be a good friend. Pupils enjoy socialising in the hall at lunchtime. They play nicely together on the playground. Pupils know that bullying is not tolerated at their school.

Parents and staff are very positive about the changes that have taken place at Stickney recently. They can see the improvements brought about by the new headteacher. However, the quality of education at Stickney is not yet good enough. This is because curriculum thinking in several subjects and areas of learning is not clear. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

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

The new headteacher has been focused on improving all aspects of the curriculum. The sequence of learning is now set out precisely in some subjects. Where this work has been completed, it is clear what pupils need to know and when they need to know it. However, many parts of the curriculum are not yet at this level. In several subjects, leaders have not identified and ordered the important knowledge that pupils need to be taught. This means that pupils do not build their understanding systematically over time. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' knowledge in some subjects lacks accuracy, depth and detail.

Children in early years enjoy their learning. They love listening to stories. Staff in the early years grasp opportunities to develop children's communication and language skills. They take part in children's play. Staff use this time to introduce children to new words. They ask children questions to check on their understanding and develop it further. However, it is not yet clear what children are expected to learn in all the different areas of the early years curriculum.

Staff follow the school's chosen phonics programme closely. They teach phonics well. Pupils' reading books match the letter sounds that they know. Anyone who falls behind in phonics is given extra support straight away. However, the reading curriculum beyond phonics is not as effective. Leaders have not set out what needs to be taught in order to develop pupils' reading comprehension. There is no common approach to the teaching of reading in key stage 2.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain things clearly to pupils. However, teachers do not check closely enough on whether pupils know what they should. They do not help pupils recall and build on prior learning systematically in all subjects. This means that pupils do not remember what they have been taught before in sufficient detail and they do not deepen their understanding over time.

Support for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength. Teachers adapt their lessons for pupils with SEND. They provide additional resources so that pupils can be successful and independent. The leader with responsibility for SEND ensures that pupils receive precise support matched to their needs.

Leaders have rightly made reducing pupil absence one of their top priorities. They have put clear procedures in place to monitor and improve rates of attendance. However, some disadvantaged pupils still do not attend as regularly as they need to.

Pupils learn about equality and diversity. They have inclusive attitudes towards difference. Pupils know how to live healthily. They have many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility and leadership roles. There are many extra-curricular clubs on offer at Stickney. Pupils really appreciate the wide range of clubs that are available for them to take part in.

Subject leadership is early on in its development. As a result, its effectiveness varies across school. Some leaders have only just started to develop the sequence of learning in their subject. Some leaders do not have an accurate overview of how well their subject is being implemented.

The school is being supported well by the local authority. Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors know that they need to widen the checks they do to make sure the quality of education is high across the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff look out for the signs that pupils may need help. Staff know to report any concern they might have promptly, no matter how small. Record-keeping is detailed. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding meet regularly to discuss concerns and check that things are improving for pupils. Leaders know when to seek the support of other agencies. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and to report anything that worries them. Pupils told inspectors, 'All the teachers look out for us and check that we are OK. If ever we are upset, they take an interest and sort it out.'

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not well sequenced in several subjects. This is also the case for some areas of learning in the early years. Where this is so, the important knowledge that pupils need to know has not yet been broken down and set out in a logical order. Consequently, pupils do not build their understanding cumulatively over time. Leaders must precisely identify the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn in all parts of the curriculum, from the early years through to Year 6.
- Teachers do not routinely go over the important knowledge that pupils have learned before in all subjects. As a result, pupils do not remember what they have been taught before in sufficient detail and they do not deepen their understanding over time. Leaders must ensure that teachers check closely on what pupils know, helping them to recall and build on prior learning systematically.
- Curriculum leadership is in the early stages of development. Some subject leaders have only recently begun the task of putting a well-sequenced curriculum in place. Procedures to check on the implementation and impact of the curriculum are not yet well established in all subjects. Senior leaders must ensure that every subject leader has the training that they need to set out the knowledge that pupils must learn in a logical order. All subject leaders must check on how effectively their curriculum is being implemented so that pupils know and remember what they should. Governors must also hold leaders to account for the quality of education in all curriculum subjects.
- Too many pupils are persistently absent, particularly disadvantaged pupils. Missing so much time at school reduces the chances of these pupils making the progress that they need to. Leaders must sharpen their procedures for dealing with low attendance in order to reduce the rate of persistent absence.

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	120629
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10254825
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Leigh Arnold
Executive headteacher	Rachael Cotton
Website	www.stickneyprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up her post in September 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in October 2014. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and history. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders,

visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector also looked at subject plans and viewed pupils' work for art, design and technology, geography and physical education.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the executive deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for pupils with SEND, behaviour, the early years, and personal development.
- The lead inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nick Asker

Ofsted Inspector

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