

Inspection of a good school: Standens Barn Primary School

Flaxwell Court, Standens Barn, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 9EH

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 July 2023

Outcome

Standens Barn Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and children in the early years, are happy and safe in this caring school. They talk confidently about 'being their BEST' (brave, enthusiastic, safe and thoughtful). They demonstrate these values in their excellent behaviour and the respect they show for each other. Pupils talk about the good relationships they have with their friends.

Leaders, including trustees, have high expectations of the pupils. They strive for excellence in every respect. Teachers are ambitious for pupils and care about their achievements. Trust and school leaders are clear as 'one team' about the standards they expect. They work hard to make the curriculum and lessons interesting. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning and the breadth of subjects they study. They achieve well across the range of subjects. They develop technical language to talk about the knowledge they remember.

Teachers plan trips and visits so that pupils can learn inside and outside the classroom. Pupils enjoy these trips and develop their knowledge of the subjects they study as a result. For example, they visit a shoe museum and a chocolate factory to extend their knowledge of design and technology within history.

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

Leaders have made sure the curriculum is ambitious. This includes in the early years, where children make a strong start. Teachers support children to develop their knowledge of early reading, writing and mathematics. Children use this knowledge across the curriculum and in their play. They independently select and combine materials. For example, choosing materials for a waterproof boat.

Leaders have created a logically organised curriculum. They plan sequences of lessons that help pupils build their knowledge over time. They help pupils to connect important knowledge across subjects, for example science and design and technology. Pupils use

words such as oscillation to describe the movement of models. They talk about the advantages of different pulleys in products they make.

Leaders ensure that teachers complete training to improve their knowledge and teaching practice. Occasionally, teachers do not precisely match the tasks that pupils complete to pupils' existing knowledge. A small number of pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

Most subject leaders use assessment well to check the impact of the curriculum. They identify misconceptions and gaps in knowledge. They make adaptations to lessons so pupils fill those gaps.

Leaders make sure pupils succeed. They accurately identify and support the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are fully included in lessons. Teachers plan bespoke support to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders have designed a reading curriculum that sets out what pupils should learn and when. Children learn to read as soon as they start school. Teachers use good subject knowledge to teach reading well. Pupils, including pupils with English as an additional language, quickly become accurate readers. Teachers promptly identify pupils who need more help with their reading. Pupils who have extra support with reading catch up quickly.

The teaching of reading is a strength across the school. Pupils in key stage two are confident readers. Leaders have ensured that pupils identify the key features of good writing when they are reading. This helps pupils develop their own writing. Leaders promote a love of reading with recommended 'BEST' books. They link books to subjects across the curriculum. Pupils can talk about a range of authors they know and love.

Teachers ensure that the behaviour policy is consistent and fair. As a result, behaviour is excellent. Teachers talk about the school values often, so that expectations are clear. Lessons are calm. Pupils, including those with SEND, take a scholarly approach to their learning. Pupils are respectful during breaktimes and play well together.

Leaders provide wider opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills. Pupils take part in community fundraising. They vote for school parliament members. Teachers provide groups, such as 'marvellous mindfulness', for well-being at lunchtime. Leaders offer a range of clubs to extend pupils' interests. Pupils attend computing and sports clubs.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils speak confidently about an inclusive, respectful society. They learn about healthy relationships as well as about different faiths and beliefs.

Staff say that leaders ensure their workload is manageable. Trustees understand their strategic role. They communicate well with school leaders. They visit the school themselves to maintain valuable links.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All leaders, including trustees, are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They demand high standards with internal and external safeguarding assurance checks. Staff are well trained to identify pupils' needs. Pupils get the support they need in a timely way.

Leaders have systems in place to discuss and review the decisions they make. This ensures that leaders identify how to improve their practice.

Leaders carry out extensive safeguarding checks when recruiting new staff.

Pupils feel safe. Teachers ensure that pupils can identify a 'network of five' adults they can talk to about worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, teachers do not precisely match the tasks that pupils complete in lessons with pupils' existing knowledge. As a result, some pupils are not able to move their learning on at the most appropriate point. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the knowledge and strategies they need to help pupils move their learning on.

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 predecessor school, Standens Barn Primary School, to be good in November 2014.

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	144177
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10269261
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	380
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Linda Brooks
Headteacher	Amie James
Website	www.standens.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides before- and after-school care.

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 school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, and other subject leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with representatives of the trust and trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading; mathematics; and design and technology. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The inspector looked at reading plans in key stage 2, and spoke to leaders and pupils in key stage 2 about the books they read.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders about a range of subjects, including science, geography, art, religious education and history, and looked at curriculum plans. The inspector talked to leaders about assessment in these subjects. The inspector looked at pupils' books from these subjects.
- The inspector spoke to leaders, staff and governors about safeguarding. She spoke to pupils about their learning about keeping themselves safe. She reviewed a range of school documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector observed pupils at playtime and in lessons. She spoke to pupils and staff about behaviour.
- The inspector spoke to parents and considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. The inspector also talked to staff and pupils about their views.

Inspection team

Donna Moulds, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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