

# Inspection of St Stephen's Church of England Junior School, Soundwell

Lansdown Road, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 1XD

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Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since September 2015. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 7 and 8 December 2021.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy coming to St Stephen's Junior School. They describe the school as a welcoming place where there is 'something for everyone'. Pupils understand how the school's values help them to be kind and humble and to work as a team.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They hold doors open for visitors and show high levels of respect towards one another. Pupils understand the school's rules and follow them well. They listen carefully and are eager to learn. There is a calm and purposeful environment in classrooms and around the school.

Pupils feel safe. They value the warm and trusting relationships they have with staff. This is particularly the case for pupils who find it difficult to manage their emotions. Pupils say that adults listen to them and support them with any worries.

Pupils enjoy the range of clubs on offer to them, such as those for chess, baking and tag rugby. They value the opportunities they have to become house captains, values ambassadors and 'voice of the changemakers'. They say that these roles make them feel proud, give them responsibilities to make the school better and help them to set a positive example to others.

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

The school has high expectations of all pupils. It has responded well to address the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. An ambitious curriculum has been designed. It identifies what pupils need to know and when they need to know it.

Reading is prioritised. Pupils read a wide range of texts with increasing fluency and accuracy. Staff benefit from the training they receive to teach reading effectively. They routinely check for any gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. Staff ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds they are learning. If pupils fall behind, they receive the support they need to help them to catch up quickly.

The school's mathematics curriculum is designed and sequenced well. Teachers explain new concepts clearly. As a result, younger pupils develop a secure understanding of number facts. Older pupils build on this knowledge well to explain their thinking when solving more complex problems.

Pupils learn well in most wider curriculum subjects. In history, for example, pupils use their knowledge of the Vikings to make links to concepts such as chronology. However, the implementation of the curriculum is at an early stage in some subjects. As a result, some pupils do not build their knowledge well enough as they move through the school. Some pupils struggle to talk in detail about what they have learned before. This hampers the progress that some pupils make.

The school has put in place clear systems to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff know these pupils well. Individual pupil plans are precise. As a result, most pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. Despite this, some parents and carers of pupils with SEND raise concerns about how well the school communicates with them. The school is aware of this and has plans in place to ensure that parents are better informed.

Pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning. They behave well in lessons. Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities on offer to them from the 'play pod' during social times.

The school's values underpin the approach to pupils' personal development. Pupils understand why it is important to treat everyone equally and with respect. They know that a good friend needs to be caring and trusting. They develop their sense of character by singing in the local community. They say that this enables them to help others.

Governors know the school's strengths and areas for improvement well. They provide appropriate support and challenge to the school. Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the support they receive from leaders, particularly with regard to their well-being and workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The implementation of the curriculum is at an early stage in some foundation subjects. Consequently, pupils have not yet gained the depth of knowledge that they need to build their learning well over time. The school needs to ensure that the curriculum for foundation subjects is fully and effectively implemented so that pupils gain the knowledge they need.

## **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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109167
<b>Local authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240530
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	346
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Nicholas John Cullimore-Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louisa Wilson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ststephensjun.org.uk">www.ststephensjun.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 and 8 December 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a Church of England voluntary-controlled school. It is part of the Diocese of Bristol. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in March 2022, when the school was judged to be good.
- The school use one registered and one unregistered alternative provider.
- There is a before- and after-school club, which is managed by the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, staff, pupils and representatives from the governing body. The lead inspector also had a telephone discussion with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 reading to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Ben Jordan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Emma Jelley	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Fletcher	His Majesty's Inspector

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