

Inspection of St Ives Primary & Nursery School

Sandy Lane, St Ives, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 2LE

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Laura Crossley. This school is part of The Heath Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Justine Horn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Musselwhite.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Ives Primary & Nursery School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St Ives Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as St Ives Primary & Nursery School as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is ambitious for every pupil. St Ives is a happy, vibrant and high-performing school. Many pupils hardly miss a day and show genuine pride in attending. Relationships between pupils and staff reflect a highly positive and respectful culture. Pupils understand discrimination and why it is not acceptable. They actively support the well-being of others. Everyone is accepted for who they are.

From Nursery onwards, pupils display high levels of self-control. They develop strong and positive character traits, which enable them to persevere when they are out of their comfort zones and learning is hard. Pupils listen well to staff and each other. They demonstrate excellent manners. The curriculum is wide-ranging. Pupils learn exceptionally well across it. This prepares them superbly year on year and for secondary school.

Opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests are of exceptional quality. They learn about the arts, culture and music. This makes pupils inquisitive about the world. There are lots of clubs. Pupils make a highly positive, tangible contribution to the life of the school, for example as learning and sports ambassadors. They support local charities and brighten the days of residents at local care homes by singing and presenting to them.

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

Leaders and staff share the trust's high ambition for what pupils will achieve. Their strong commitment to evaluating the effectiveness of the school ensures that the curriculum is continuously improving. The school has a sharp focus on developing teachers' subject knowledge. This results in many staff across the school being experts in the subjects and phases they teach. These staff coach and support others so that they develop consistently strong knowledge. This ensures that the curriculum is highly successful in teaching pupils what they need to know.

Children get off to an excellent start in Nursery. Warm relationships, effective routines and close attention to early language development build children's vocabulary and personal, social and emotional development brilliantly. The curriculum continues to build pupils' knowledge and confidence year on year. Pupils become eloquent and self-assured as a result.

Staff have a shared understanding of the curriculum and implement it very well. They use the school-wide assessment systems to check what pupils know and remember effectively. Making sure that every child learns to read, whatever their starting point, is everyone's mantra. Pupils learn phonics well. This sets them up to read and understand more complex texts later. Pupils achieve very well. By the time they are ready to move to secondary school, a large majority of Year 6 pupils exceed the national standards expected of them in reading and mathematics.

Pupils' work across the curriculum is consistently of high quality. Pupils learn a wealth of knowledge through the broad range of other subjects. This makes pupils very knowledgeable in subjects such as computing, French and science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Leaders check the impact of the school's curriculum astutely. This ensures that pupils get the precise teaching they need. For example, when pupils get stuck or need more practice to secure the most complex concepts in mathematics, they receive extra teaching to achieve this. This ensures that pupils keep up with the curriculum and have ample opportunities to apply their increasing knowledge over time.

Staff and pupils adhere to and value the consistency of the school's behaviour policies. Pupils behave exceptionally well. There are highly effective and consistent approaches to support pupils who need to learn how to regulate their behaviour independently.

The school aims to prepare pupils in every conceivable way to become independent, well-rounded citizens. The focus on developing one's inner self includes a myriad of activities. This helps develop pupils' determination and resilience. Pupils learn how to explore world issues, debate and make reasoned judgements and decisions. The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum teaches them a wealth of content, including drug and alcohol education and keeping healthy relationships. They also learn about careers and managing money.

The school-wide offer for sport is impressive. It includes everyone. Staff champion pupils' physical fitness all the way through the school. Notably, specialist programmes from Nursery to Year 6 support pupils who need help to develop their balance and agility. This boosts these pupils' confidence and skills markedly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Unique reference number	142505
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10242381
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Musselwhite
CEO of the trust	Justine Horn
Headteacher	Laura Crossley
Website	www.stivesprimary.com
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is a founding member of The Heath Academy Trust. The trust was formed in 2015. Currently, the trust has six primary schools in East Dorset.
- The school's Nursery takes children from two years of age.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There is a before- and after-school club.

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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school staff. An inspector met with the chair of trustees and the CEO of the trust and held a telephone discussion with the chair of the local school committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and computing. For each deep dive, the inspectors 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.
- Inspectors also discussed other subject areas with subject leaders, talked to pupils about their learning across the curriculum, and looked at samples of work in science, art and design, modern foreign languages and physical education.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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. They spoke with pupils and staff about behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

Claire Mirams

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