

Inspection of a good school: Stechford Primary School

Albert Road, Stechford, Birmingham B33 8SJ

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 February 2024

Outcome

Stechford Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Stechford Primary School is a welcoming, friendly school. Pupils are happy and well cared for. Staff know their pupils and families extremely well and there is a real sense of community.

Behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils move around the school calmly. They are polite and helpful to visitors. Staff model their high expectations. Adults and pupils treat each other with mutual respect. The environment is bright and attractive, and displays in corridors celebrate pupils' work and efforts. This creates a purposeful learning environment where pupils thrive.

Pupils feel confident to talk to adults about any concerns they may have. Staff quickly deal with any issues. This helps pupil feel and be safe.

The school has high aspirations for all its pupils and its community. Everyone works hard to provide rich and purposeful experiences to widen pupils' horizons, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). The school ensures that pupils with SEND can join in all aspects of school life.

The vast majority of parents and carers are very happy with the school, the support the school offers to their children and to them. This is especially true for parents of pupils with SEND.

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

The sudden death of the previous headteacher in November 2022 had an intense impact on staff, pupils and the community. Working closely as a team and with the support of external agencies including the local authority, the school has made a positive recovery.

The school has reviewed its curriculum. The resulting curriculum is vibrant, well planned and meets the needs of pupils. Learning builds in a logical way with assessment built in.

This ensures that staff know what to teach, how and when. They check that pupils retain and build on past learning and key knowledge. In some subjects, these new developments are at an early stage.

Leaders monitor the curriculum thoroughly. They have selected schemes and resources that help staff to teach well. All staff have received support and training to ensure that they have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. Professional development for subject leaders means they lead their subject with confidence and expertise.

Children in early years settle well. There are well-established routines and expectations. The focus on language development supports children's progress. Pupils throughout the school enjoy learning. They speak confidently about what they have learnt. The school identified that pupils had some gaps in their learning and subsequently adapted lessons and blocks of learning to fill these gaps. The school has put in place systems to revisit learning regularly so pupils know and remember more over time.

The teaching of early reading is well established. Children in Reception class and Nursery enjoy joining in with rhymes, stories and the daily routines of early reading. All staff have received appropriate training and ongoing support to deliver the school's phonic scheme. Children in the early years, many of whom join the school with little English, soon recognise letters and the sounds they make and begin to read quickly. The whole-school approach also ensures that pupils who join the school beyond Reception with little English receive good support. The school wants all pupils to have a love of reading. The purchase of new texts, the development of library provision and daily story-telling sessions are all promoting a positive reading culture and encourage pupils to read more widely.

The writing curriculum is at an early stage of refinement. The school recognises that its curriculum did not previously offer pupils enough opportunities to develop the skills to write well. As a result, pupils cannot write as well as they should for their age. However, there are positive signs of improvement. Pupils' skills are developing and they now have more opportunities to write at length across a range of genres. Some writing, such as that seen in the school newspaper, is of a higher standard than other examples.

The school successfully adapts its curriculum and learning environment to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. The school has strengthened its identification of pupils with SEND and ensures that pupils receive the support they need. As a result, pupils with SEND feel more secure and confident. They make positive progress academically and emotionally.

The school works effectively to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and that parents understand the importance of regular attendance.

The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. Pupils enjoy taking on roles and responsibilities such as peer mediators, rights respecting councillors or school journalists.

Staff feel valued and well supported. They feel workload is manageable. The new governing body has a wide skill set and offers support, challenge and encouragement to leaders and staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not have strategies in place to monitor systematically the impact of the planned curriculum. As a result, leaders cannot be sure that the curriculum is having the impact that they intend across all subjects. The school should consider how best to monitor and evaluate the impact of the curriculum in all subjects so that it can adjust it as required in order to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.
- The writing curriculum is not as well developed as other curriculum areas and does not reflect the high ambition and expectation of other subjects. As a result, pupils receive limited writing opportunities and experiences that result in outcomes that are not as strong as they need to be. The school should further develop, then swiftly implement, its new curriculum and carefully monitor the teaching and learning of writing to raise pupils' ability to write well.

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 school to be good in December 2013.

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	103262
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294477
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	437
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Debbie Menzel
Headteacher	Rebecca Hatton
Website	www.stechfordprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The headteacher was appointed acting headteacher in November 2022 and became substantive in April 2023. The deputy headteacher was appointed in May 2023.

Information about this inspection

- 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders and the special educational needs co-ordinator, members of staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the school's governing body including the chair of governors.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at breaktimes. The inspector spoke to pupils about pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parent free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The lead inspector spoke with parents and families at end of the school day.

Inspection team

Tina Willmott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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