

Inspection of a good school: Little Stoke Primary School

Little Stoke Lane, Little Stoke, Bristol BS34 6HY

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 March, and 17 April 2024

Outcome

Little Stoke Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Little Stoke Primary School is a friendly and welcoming place to learn. Staff build positive relationships with pupils. Pupils embrace the school's values of aspiration, inclusion, responsibility and collaboration in all they do and say. For example, pupils learn and play cooperatively alongside their peers. This makes for a happy and safe school.

The school creates an environment where pupils feel listened to and valued. Staff are kind and patient. Pupils develop the confidence to talk about any worries or concerns they might have. They trust adults to resolve issues quickly. The school has high expectations for every pupil. In turn, pupils listen attentively and try their best in lessons. The school is a calm and purposeful place, where pupils can focus on their learning.

Pupils enjoy the range of activities and clubs that develop and stretch their talents and interests. These include extra-curricular sports, gardening and music. Pupils have many opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities and influence school life, such as playground leaders and school council members.

The school has established effective relationships with parents. The great majority of parents are fully supportive of the school. They appreciate the inclusive, welcoming ethos the school creates.

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

In recent years, the school has had to manage many staffing changes and reverse a legacy of weaker past provision. Some of this contributed to below national Year 6 outcomes in English and mathematics in 2023. However, the school has worked at pace to secure important improvements to the quality of education. Pupils are doing much better now than in the past.

Reading is a top priority across the school. Children learn stories, rhymes and songs to build their knowledge of letters and sounds. As soon as children start in the Reception

Year, they quickly learn to read. Staff teach the phonics programme effectively. They give well-targeted help to pupils who need it. No pupil is left behind when learning to read. Teachers use carefully chosen books to broaden pupils' vocabulary and knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 6 build an understanding of the role of women during the war from the books they study. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about reading. Most develop into capable readers by the end of Year 6.

The school has designed an ambitious, well-structured curriculum. Teachers revisit and recap prior learning to help pupils build on concepts they have learned before. For example, in history, younger pupils talk confidently about the difference between Anglo-Saxon and Roman society. Older pupils build on this learning to understand the impact of the Holocaust on society during the Second World War. However, in a few subjects, the curriculum does not clearly set out the most essential information that pupils should know and understand. Consequently, pupils do not have the same depth of knowledge across all subjects.

A focus on improving the quality of teaching is paying off. Teachers break tasks down into small steps to help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make sense of new concepts. In mathematics, for example, staff regularly check what pupils understand and remember. They repeat learning to help pupils grasp concepts and strategies. However, in some subjects in the wider curriculum, the approach to assessment is not as rigorous. Where this is the case, teaching does not consistently remedy gaps in some pupils' learning before moving on to something new.

Children's positive attitudes to school start in the Reception Year. Children gain confidence and independence with the secure routines that are in place. Throughout the school, pupils behave well and follow instructions from staff promptly.

Clear systems are in place to identify pupils with SEND. Staff know pupils well. They regularly adapt the curriculum so that pupils with SEND experience success and learn the curriculum alongside their peers.

The school creates a range of opportunities to enhance pupils' wider development. Pupils know how to keep safe and maintain good physical and mental health. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about positive relationships and to accept and embrace people's differences. All of this prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Governors understand the school's priorities. They provide effective support and challenge to school leaders. Staff appreciate how leaders support them to manage their workload. They value the ongoing training to help them teach the curriculum effectively. Staff are proud to work at Little Stoke Primary.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In upper key stage 2, a legacy of weak provision remains for some groups of pupils in English and mathematics. As a result, a minority of pupils do not have a secure grasp of the most important curriculum content. Governors and the school should continue to prioritise their work to eradicate the remaining legacy of underachievement so that pupils achieve well in all subject areas and are ready for the next stage of their education.
- In a few subjects, the curriculum does not set out clearly the most essential information that pupils should know and understand. In addition, in these subjects, teaching does not use assessment effectively to check what pupils know and can do, before moving on to something new. Consequently, pupils do not have the same depth of knowledge in these subjects as in others. The school should ensure that it identifies the precise knowledge in these subjects, and that assessment is used effectively, so that pupils know and can do more over time.

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 January 2015.

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	131699
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10313268
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Matt Fowles
Headteacher	Dan Ross
Website	www.littlestokeps.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been many changes to staffing since the previous inspection. The headteacher took up post in January 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspection started on 20 March 2024. Inspectors returned on 17 April 2024 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. 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, the deputy headteacher, members of staff and the chair of the local governing body. The lead inspector held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, including early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the school, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in art, design technology and modern foreign languages.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 to 6 reading to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record of adults working in the school, 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.
- An inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also took into consideration the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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