

# Inspection of a good school: Stalyhill Junior School

Hereford Way, Mottram Old Road, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 2TD

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Inspection dates: 23 and 24 July 2024

## **Outcome**

Stalyhill Junior School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils at Stalyhill Junior School are polite and welcoming to all. They enjoy playing and learning with their classmates. Pupils said that staff keep them safe in school and teach them how to stay safe out of school.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is reflected in how well pupils are prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils spoke with confidence about their learning and the important knowledge that they need as they leave junior school. They achieve well.

The school is a harmonious place in which to learn. Throughout the school day, pupils know that staff expect them to behave well. Pupils, including those with SEND, are attentive in lessons and engage positively with their learning.

The school provides pupils with a rich range of experiences that enhance their learning. These experiences make up many of the pupils' greatest memories of their time at Stalyhill. For example, pupils take part in a variety of trips to the surrounding area and further afield, including to a local art gallery. They appreciate the visits from a local charity that help them to explore and reflect on important values.

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

The school has designed a coherent and well-thought-out curriculum that meticulously identifies the small steps in knowledge and skills that it wants pupils to know and remember. Learning is ordered logically. In this way, the curriculum supports pupils to develop a secure body of subject knowledge over time.

Where the curriculum is most effective, teachers design appropriate activities that help pupils to learn subject content well. In these subjects, teachers check effectively that pupils' knowledge is secure before introducing new learning. However, in some subjects,

teachers' checks on pupils' learning at the end of a unit of work do not focus on the key content that pupils should know. This prevents teachers from identifying accurately, and building on, what pupils know and remember.

In recent times, staff have accessed a wide range of training, particularly relating to the teaching of reading. Pupils enjoy listening to the diverse range of texts that staff read to them in their reading lessons and at the end of each day. This is helping to foster a love of reading. Most pupils read with fluency and understanding.

While the majority of pupils arrive at the school with a secure knowledge of phonics, a small number of pupils join in Year 3 unable to read with sufficient fluency. The school does not ensure that staff help pupils with gaps in their reading knowledge to catch up as quickly as they should. This sometimes hinders how well these pupils learn in other subjects.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. It works well with external agencies to ensure that these pupils receive high-quality support promptly. Staff successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of these pupils. For example, some pupils with SEND use assistive technology, such as word processing software, to support them to access the whole curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at less structured times is very positive. Pupils move around school in a sensible and orderly way. At playtimes, pupils access a range of equipment to support them to play together well.

The school has high expectations for pupils' rates of attendance. It takes effective action to reduce the absence levels of those pupils who do not attend school as often as they should. Typically, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, attend school regularly.

The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils' wider development. Pupils have a secure knowledge of, and respect for, people's different faiths, cultures and values. They enjoy taking part in debates about moral and ethical issues, appreciating the viewpoints of others. Pupils experience many opportunities to enhance their broader development. They develop a keen sense of responsibility through a variety of nominated roles, such as science ambassadors, sports leaders and school councillors. Pupils are proud of what they achieve in these roles, including their part in designing the large mural on the playground.

The newly formed governing body provides valuable support and challenge to the school. Staff are highly positive about the support and the consideration that they receive for their workload and well-being. This includes useful training to help them carry out their roles effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- A small number of pupils at the early stage of learning to read do not receive sufficient support to practise reading the sounds that they know. This means that some pupils are hindered in learning to read as fluently as they should. The school should make sure that pupils who struggle to learn to read benefit from regular and effective support.
- In a small number of subjects, the strategies that teachers use to check how well pupils are learning do not focus on the most important knowledge that pupils should know. This means that teachers are not as well equipped as they should be to design future learning for pupils. The school should refine its approach to assessment in these subjects to check that pupils learn knowledge confidently.

## 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 June 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106189
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348016
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	231
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Katie Buckley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lisa Lockett
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stalyhill-jun.tameside.sch.uk">www.stalyhill-jun.tameside.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new executive headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- Since the last inspection, the school has formed a new federated governing body between the infant and the junior school. A new chair of governors has been appointed.

## 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 the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the executive headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. She met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils from Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and reviewed a sample of pupils' work.
- 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 inspector reviewed a range of documents, including records of governing body meetings, leaders' self-evaluation of the school and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. She considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

### **Inspection team**

Lisa Littler, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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