

# Inspection of Stoke Hill Infant and Nursery School

Stoke Hill, Exeter, Devon EX4 7DB

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Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness 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 July 2015.

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

Pupils are happy and proud to be a part of Stoke Hill. They enjoy coming to school and show positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils move around the school sensibly knowing what is expected of them. Pupils feel well cared for and know that adults will help them if they have any worries. This is because staff take time to build warm relationships with pupils. This starts in the early years where staff help the youngest children settle well. Parents and carers praise the school highly for the care the school has for their children.

The school has raised its ambition of what pupils should learn through the design of the curriculum. Pupils have risen to the high expectations staff have of them and typically learn the curriculum well. By the time they leave Year 2, pupils are well prepared for junior school.

The wider development of pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils appreciate the many opportunities that enrich the curriculum, such as regular trips and visits. Pupil leadership roles help to develop pupils into responsible citizens. As a result, pupils know that they make a difference to their school. For example, 'wildlife champions' look after the school garden.

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

There have been changes to the leadership structure of the federation. These have resulted in the school identifying areas for improvement. Alongside governors, leaders have an accurate view of the school. The school rightly identified that the curriculum needed greater ambition and clarity about what pupils should learn and by when. It has considered the knowledge pupils need to know and remember at each stage to prepare them well for their next stage, starting in the early years. This ensures that teachers are clear about what to teach and when to help pupils learn the curriculum well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are identified early to ensure they get the support they need.

Staff benefit from regular professional development to develop their expertise. This has strengthened the teaching of the curriculum. For example, pupils are supported to deepen their knowledge, making links with what they have learned before through tasks that closely match the intended curriculum. However, there is variability in some subjects. On occasions, the work given to pupils does not always meet the high ambition of the curriculum, including in the early years. Sometimes, teachers are not clear when pupils may need additional support or if they are ready for further challenge. When this happens, it limits what some pupils learn.

The school has prioritised teaching pupils to learn to read. Staff receive regular professional development training to develop their expertise to teach the phonics programme well. Pupils are given time to practise and apply new sounds with closely matched reading books. The school identifies and supports any pupils who have gaps in their phonic knowledge to help them to keep up. The school promotes the enjoyment of

reading in a variety of ways. Pupils talk fondly of the 'secret story teller' who visits to read books to them.

Pupils write widely and often across the curriculum. This starts in the early years where many children choose to write independently using a range of media and writing materials. The school supports most pupils to develop their handwriting, spelling and punctuation to build their knowledge over time. However, some pupils who are at the earlier stages of developing these skills are not given all the support they need to secure their knowledge deeply. They take part in writing tasks that are too challenging for them to achieve success. As a result, these pupils progress less well through the curriculum.

Pupils learn in a calm and orderly setting. This is because the school has ensured that there are clear expectations to follow. At times, some children in early years do not get all the support they need to develop their personal, social and emotional development (PSED). As a result, they are sometimes not helped well enough to follow the school rules of 'ready, respectful, safe'. Consequently, these children are less prepared for their next stage.

Pupils are equipped for life in modern Britain as the school teaches them the importance of the fundamental British Values. For example, the focus on mutual respect ensures pupils know that discrimination is wrong and that everyone should be treated fairly. As a result, pupils show respect for others. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy both physically and mentally. The school places a high priority on supporting pupils' mental health, such as through '10 a day'.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- On occasions, the work given to some pupils does not consistently meet the high ambition of the school's curriculum and at times, is not adapted for pupils' different starting points. As a result, some pupils are not able to deepen their understanding. The school should ensure that all pupils receive appropriate work that closely matches the high ambition of the curriculum based on what they know and remember to build their knowledge securely over time.
- Some pupils, who are at the early stages of learning to write, are given work that is beyond what they know and can do. This is because they have not yet grasped the basic transcription skills of writing, such as handwriting, spelling and punctuation. The school should ensure that it provides pupils with the appropriate support they need to secure transcription knowledge in writing that will help them to complete more complex written tasks with success.

- At times, the school does not help some children in the early years well enough to develop their prime areas of learning, including PSED. This is because adults do not consistently recognise when some children need additional support to deepen their understanding. The school needs to strengthen the expertise of staff to promote consistently high-quality interactions that help children to develop their knowledge in these areas to be better prepared for their next stage

## 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>	113086
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10374097
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	298
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jade Earle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Yvonne Hammerton-Jackson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stokehill.devon.sch.uk">www.stokehill.devon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 and 9 July 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the leadership of the federation of two schools has restructured. There is one executive headteacher across both the infant and junior schools, with a head of school in each.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club based at the junior school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 spoke with school leaders, curriculum leaders, parents, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. 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 the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Barton

Ofsted Inspector

Craig Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

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