

Inspection of a good school: Stanford In the Vale CofE Primary School

High Street, Stanford in the Vale, Faringdon, Oxfordshire SN7 8LH

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Stanford In the Vale CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this inspiring and inclusive school. Leaders have created a culture that promotes ambition, kindness and respect. Pupils show a genuine care for one another and form strong friendships. Staff know pupils really well. Pupils love coming to this school, eager for the day ahead. They admire their teachers and feel well cared for. Pupils are proud of how welcoming their school is and the opportunities available to them. These include forest school and a rich range of clubs.

Pupils know that staff have high expectations of their behaviour and what they can achieve. Pupils rise to these challenges, so they succeed in both their academic and personal development.

Pupils feel happy and safe because a committed team support them. Mental health and the well-being of pupils are top priorities, especially for raising attendance and achievement. If bullying or unkindness happens, adults resolve issues quickly. Pupils have every confidence that staff will listen and help with any concerns they may have.

Parents appreciate that the school is at the heart of the community and brings everyone together throughout the year. One parent said, 'We love how confident and well nurtured the children are, and how well the children are bonded as friends.'

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

The headteacher leads with clarity and integrity. All decisions are based on what is best for children. Leaders have built a curriculum that is vibrant and relevant. Leaders continue to develop teachers' skills to teach the curriculum well. Leaders give time and support for all adults to hone their craft and subject knowledge, with training based on sound educational research. Well-chosen activities and resources help pupils to develop their understanding and strengthen long-term memory. As a result, pupils typically achieve well, particularly in reading. Leaders recognise that in some subjects, such as physical education and mathematics, pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they could. This

is because leaders are not always explicit about the key knowledge pupils must understand and use. Assessment is not used consistently well. For example, teachers do not always check pupils' understanding or give them sufficient time to practise the calculation methods taught. This means that the learning sometimes moves on in key stage 2 before the pupils are secure or ready. Leaders have already begun to address this and skilfully use expertise from local mathematics hubs to further improve teaching.

Parents praised the school's communication, especially in the early years when children first join the school. Staff work well with outside agencies to secure extra help and support when pupils need it. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and any pupils who need additional help to manage their emotions. Leaders and staff possess a sound understanding of varying needs and are skilled in identifying pupils who may have difficulties.

Leaders prioritise reading across the school. Adults are well trained in how to teach pupils to read. Pupils who need it benefit from extra help and time to practise reading. Children get off to a strong start in early years as staff prioritise opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills so successfully. As pupils move into Year 1, they learn to decode unfamiliar words with increasing confidence. When pupils get older, they are introduced to a range of high-quality texts to inspire them. This helps them with ideas and introducing new vocabulary into their writing.

Behaviour in the school is routinely impressive. Pupils follow the established and clear routines consistently. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes and focus on their learning so that no learning time is wasted.

Precisely considered extra-curricular activities and experiences enrich learning. For example, pupils have the opportunity to take on leadership roles, such as community leaders, in the school council or as sports leaders, to promote the school's embedded values. As a result, pupils become confident ambassadors for the school and themselves. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning is of a high quality and underpins the strong sense of service. The extensive range of clubs and opportunities help foster creative skills, development of healthy lifestyles and exposure to the musical arts. The personal development of every child is a considerable strength of the school.

Governors are completely in tune with the school's strengths and priorities. They challenge and support leaders to pinpoint the impact of their work on raising standards in the school and enriching learning. Staff feel very supported and valued. Leaders inspire staff's commitment to working seamlessly together for the good of the pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are vigilant. Leaders train staff well so they know what to look for and how to keep pupils safe. Staff understand how to report and record any concerns they may have about any pupil's welfare. Leaders follow up quickly on all concerns raised. When appropriate, leaders work closely with external

agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the help they need in a timely way. Leaders challenge other professionals if they feel additional action is required. Leaders ensure that the statutory pre-employment checks on staff are carried out. All record-keeping is meticulous and carefully checked.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not consistently incorporate effective assessment opportunities into their lesson designs. Nor do they always utilise opportunities within the lesson to check that all pupils are developing the intended understanding. This means that some pupils do not acquire the knowledge and skills that they need. Leaders need to develop assessments so that teachers are systematically checking pupils' understanding of the essential content and all pupils are supported to embed this knowledge and use it fluently.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2017.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	123159
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10241976
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Lewis
Headteacher	Amanda Willis
Website	www.stanford.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Stanford In the Vale is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school under the Diocese of Oxford and was previously graded as outstanding for its religious character in June 2018.
- The school provides wraparound care through a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteacher and inclusion manager.
- The inspector met with seven governors, including the chair of governors. He also held separate telephone conversations with representatives from the local authority and the Diocese of Oxford.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. Deep dives included visiting a range of lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking with leaders, teachers and pupils about how teaching in these subjects builds pupils' knowledge over time. The inspector also heard pupils read to a known adult.
- The inspector checked a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. He also reviewed the school's records for child protection and assessed the school's culture of safeguarding throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school development plan and relevant school policies.
- The inspector took account of parents' responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, along with their written comments. He also talked with parents on the morning of the second day of inspection.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views about their learning, what behaviour is like at the school and whether they felt safe. He also met with a range of staff to gather their views on how leaders support them and took account of their responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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