

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Ann's Heath Junior School

Sandhills Lane, Virginia Water, Surrey GU25 4DS

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 December 2024

Outcome

St Ann's Heath Junior School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a very happy, warm and welcoming community school. Parents and carers rightly value how staff 'really care for, support and challenge all children', which is how one parent summed up the views of others. Expectations of pupils are high, with the development of the whole child at the very heart of the school's work.

Shared aspirations underpin the typically high standards pupils achieve here. Pupils benefit from a rich, ambitious curriculum. Learning is significantly enhanced by a range of experiences, events and clubs. Staff share high expectations for pupils' achievement, which in most subject areas are realised. Pupils immerse themselves in all that is on offer. They become confident, collaborative learners who are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and their conduct around school are impressive. They help each other however they can. Year 6 pupils relish the multitude of different leadership roles on offer for them to support younger children or to contribute to the wider life of the school. These include roles such as sports leaders, site leaders, house captains and many others. Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They were keen to share how much they appreciate how kind the staff are here. As one pupil said, 'We can pick any adult; they will all help us.'

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

The school has crafted an ambitious, well-structured curriculum. Staff understand the importance of early reading in underpinning pupils' success. They swiftly identify and target support for any pupils with gaps in their reading skills. Over time, pupils become confident and fluent readers. All pupils are encouraged to read and are exposed to a

range of progressively ambitious texts. This helps foster a love for reading. The school's recent focus on boosting pupils' writing skills has supported significant improvements in writing standards.

Pupils enjoy learning how to solve increasingly complex mathematics problems as they move through the school. Most tackle the challenges set in lessons enthusiastically and can confidently share the methods they use. Typically, teachers check pupils' learning well. This means any misconceptions are quickly addressed. At times, however, teachers' checks do not identify pupils who are already secure in their knowledge and who are ready to move on. Some pupils do not learn as deeply as they could because teachers do not adapt subsequent learning as effectively as they could.

The school's approach to designing the curriculum promotes opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in different contexts, for example in the humanities and the science curriculums. Many pupils flourish achieving high levels of understanding and impressive written work. However, in some aspects of the curriculum, the key knowledge that is taught is either very complex or there is too much included. This hampers how much some pupils learn.

Leaders, governors and staff work together well to make sure that the best interests of children underpin everything they do. Carefully crafted improvement priorities ensure that the school drives forward. Leaders ensure that staff's workload is considered as part of any changes that are made. Staff feel part of a well-supported team.

Staff are committed to ensuring all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve their very best. The school identifies pupils' additional needs precisely. Positive relationships and suitable adaptations to learning ensure that these pupils get the extra support that they need.

The school's three golden rules, 'We are ready, we are respectful, we are safe', underpin the high standards of behaviour throughout the school. Any disruptions are rare. This school knows its pupils' families well. Helping all pupils to attend regularly is a priority. Where some find this more challenging, tailored assistance provided by the school is effective in reducing absence.

Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from the school's particularly impressive personal development programme and enrichment opportunities. Pupils value the many opportunities to take on responsibility, make tangible contributions to the school community and learn valuable life skills. Noteworthy in this provision is the school's 'St Ann's Inspiring Leaders' programme. This promotes wider learning, including financial budgeting, domestic skills, first aid, caring for the community, public speaking and a wealth of other skills. Pupils here are nurtured to become independent learners who are well prepared for their next steps by the time they leave the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, pupils are introduced to too complex or too much subject-specific knowledge, which they are required to consider and apply in later written tasks. Pupils are not able to remember important information as intended. In these aspects of the curriculum, the school should ensure that the knowledge pupils are expected to learn supports pupils' progress through the wider curriculum.
- Some teachers' checks on pupils' learning are less effective, which means subsequent teaching in some subjects is not adapted as effectively as it could be. Pupils could, therefore, achieve more highly and think more deeply about their learning. The school should continue to support staff to be able to skilfully challenge all pupils, in line with the best examples in the school.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in April 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 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	125073
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10341571
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Gammerman
Co-Headteachers	Jackie King and Pip O'Connor
Website	www.stannsheath.org
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school manages wraparound breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including those relating to behaviour, attendance, governance and leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.

- Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school and to talk about their work. The inspector also held informal conversations with pupils at lunchtime.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff represented in meetings and the responses to Ofsted's online surveys were considered.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with the co-headteachers, senior leaders and range of school staff. The inspector also met with members of the governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority. Regular update meetings were held with the co-headteachers.
- 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.

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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