

Stokesay Primary School

Address: Market Street, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9NW

Unique reference number (URN): 141340

Inspection report: 14 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Exceptional

Inclusion

Exceptional 

Leaders' actions have had a transformational impact on pupils' achievement. Leaders and staff identify pupils' needs swiftly and with precision. They use an impressive range of assessment information, alongside extensive pastoral knowledge, to ensure that emerging or changing needs are recognised very quickly. As a result, leaders reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing promptly so pupils remain fully engaged in learning. Support is thoughtfully reviewed and adjusted so that it remains closely matched to pupils' needs over time. This means that, at Stokesay, all pupils thrive.

Disadvantaged pupils are exceptionally successful and make excellent progress from their starting points. They benefit from well targeted and careful use of pupil premium funding. Leaders evaluate the impact of this funding rigorously and use it expertly to address identified barriers, including attainment gaps and attendance. This means there are few gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported highly effectively through a well-embedded structured approach. Staff adapt teaching confidently so that pupils access the full curriculum alongside their peers. Leaders use specialist support purposefully. As a result, pupils develop increasing independence in their learning.

Leaders provide excellent support for pupils facing additional barriers, including those who speak English as an additional language or attendance challenges. Pupils who are known, or previously known, to children's social care are also expertly supported. Leaders work in collaborative partnerships with families, social care and other professionals to ensure that pupils experience stability, care and success. This ensures a consistent, inclusive approach that enables all pupils to achieve their full potential.

Strong standard

Achievement

Strong standard 

Pupils make excellent progress as they move through the carefully planned and well-sequenced curriculum. From the early years onwards, teachers build learning step by step. This helps pupils to remember key knowledge and apply it with growing confidence as they move through year groups and key stages. Early reading, writing and number skills are taught securely and revisited regularly. This means that pupils are well equipped to succeed across all subjects.

Pupils achieve well in national tests and assessments. Results in phonics, multiplication, reading, writing and mathematics are consistently high and often above national averages. This reflects leaders' high expectations and effective teaching over time.

All groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make much progress from their starting points. As a result, all

pupils are very well prepared for their next steps.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard 

Leaders take a strategic and compassionate approach to attendance. They place it alongside behaviour as a core priority because they know children learn best when they are present, settled and supported. Attendance rates are high and continue to improve. This is because leaders analyse patterns closely, talk regularly about individual pupils and act early to remove barriers.

Families feel listened to and supported, while expectations remain clear and consistent. Targeted help, flexible adjustments and close partnership working have had a real impact for pupils with additional needs, medical circumstances or social challenges. Where attendance has been lower, including for small groups or individuals, leaders' actions secure rapid and sustained improvement. This means that persistent absence continues to fall quickly.

Behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Staff model calm, respectful behaviour and pupils respond with focus, kindness and pride in their work. Bullying is rare and taken seriously. Any discrimination, harassment or unkind behaviour, online or offline, is addressed quickly, consistently and effectively. This means pupils feel safe and valued.

Clear routines help learning flow smoothly. Pupils show resilience and enthusiasm, even when learning feels challenging. Inclusive approaches ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive thoughtful adaptations and pastoral support. This means that behaviour support builds confidence, independence and belonging for everyone.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard 

Leaders provide clear and confident strategic leadership of the curriculum and teaching. They understand what works well and where further refinement is needed. This means they take purposeful action to improve learning for all pupils. Leaders invest carefully in staff development, ensuring that teachers are well prepared to teach all subjects with confidence and skill.

Staff expertise is a real strength. Teachers know their pupils well and draw effectively on training to shape lessons that meet different needs. Professional development is closely aligned to school priorities, including early reading, writing and assessment. Staff can explain clearly how this training improves their practice. Collaborative approaches help share expertise and promote consistency across the school.

The curriculum is ambitious, well sequenced and designed to build secure foundations from the earliest stages. Leaders prioritise reading, language, writing and mathematics so that pupils develop the knowledge and confidence they need to succeed across all subjects.

Teaching is responsive and adaptive. Teachers use effective questioning, modelling and assessment to check understanding and adjust lessons in the moment. Extra support is provided quickly, where needed, without limiting expectations. An inclusive approach underpins curriculum and teaching. Staff make thoughtful adaptations so all pupils, including

those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn alongside their peers, feel supported and achieve well.

Early years

Strong standard 

Early years provision at Stokesay is built on confident, passionate and caring leadership. Leaders set a clear vision and support staff very well. This means that children experience a happy and purposeful start to school. Staff share high expectations and work closely as a team to continually improve what they offer children and their families.

The curriculum engages children and builds steadily from their interests. For example, story time, outdoor exploration and creative play help children develop high levels of communication and curiosity. Learning connects across areas so children see meaning in what they do.

Teaching is warm and skilful. Staff model language, ask thoughtful questions and encourage children to think for themselves. Staff quickly spot what children can do and adapt activities so everyone makes secure progress. Children achieve well and feel proud of their successes. They become confident learners, who try new challenges, such as writing simple words or solving number problems during play.

Wellbeing and welfare remain a clear strength. Children feel safe, happy and cared for. Routines support independence, while nurturing relationships help children settle quickly. As in the rest of the school, inclusive practice is the foundation on which early years is built. Staff know families very well and provide extra support where needed. This ensures every child feels valued, included and ready to thrive.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders provide strategic leadership that keeps pupils' best interests at the heart of all decision-making. They know the school's strengths well and use this understanding to plan purposeful improvements. Leaders' vision is shared confidently with staff, pupils and families. This clarity creates consistency across the school. Calm routines, clear behaviour expectations and positive relationships show how leaders' vision translates into everyday practice.

Over time, those responsible for governance have worked with school leaders very effectively. This collaborative approach has transformed the school. The trust board and local governing body work in close partnership to fulfil their statutory duties with diligence and care. They provide both challenge and support, holding leaders to account while working together to secure the best outcomes for pupils. Safeguarding receives regular scrutiny, giving families confidence that children's safety is a top priority.

Leaders place a firm emphasis on staff wellbeing and workload. Systems reduce unnecessary tasks and staff describe their workload as manageable. An open-door culture encourages staff to seek support, while professional trust allows them to work confidently and independently. This balance helps staff feel valued and supported. Professional learning is well planned and closely matched to classroom practice. Training in early reading,

phonics and inclusion strengthens teaching and builds expertise across the team, including for early career teachers.

The school works very closely with parents and carers, professionals and the wider community. Staff know families well, listen to their views and respond quickly to needs. Highly effective partnerships with local services and community groups ensure that pupils feel safe, included and proud to belong.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders provide clear and thoughtful leadership of personal development and wellbeing. This is guided by an ambitious vision rooted in the school's values and a solid understanding of pupils and families. Personal development is carefully planned, well sequenced and consistently reinforced across school life. As a result, pupils develop into confident, respectful individuals, who are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They take pride in belonging to the Stokesay family.

The personal development programme makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. These themes are woven effectively through lessons, assemblies and daily routines rather than taught in isolation. Pupils explore fairness, respect and responsibility across the curriculum. Assemblies celebrate cultural events, such as Black History Month, Eid and environmental awareness. Pupils reflect confidently on these experiences and apply them positively to their behaviour and relationships.

Relationships, sex and health education is age-appropriate, inclusive and sensitively delivered. Leaders work closely with parents and carers and community partners to ensure shared understanding and confidence in the programme. Pupils develop a secure understanding of healthy relationships. They are taught how to manage online and offline risks, including cyberbullying and personal safety. Pupils speak knowledgeably about where to seek help and how to protect their wellbeing.

The school promotes understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils show respect and tolerance, appreciate democracy and the rule of law and understand the importance of kindness and equality. They celebrate difference and welcome new pupils warmly.

Personal development is fully inclusive. Leaders carefully monitor participation in enrichment activities, leadership opportunities and trips to ensure all pupils, including vulnerable groups, access a wide range of experiences. Pastoral support is a notable strength. Pupils feel safe and know trusted adults will listen. They benefit from thoughtful nurture provision and effective behaviour systems that help pupils to thrive socially, emotionally and academically.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils flourish within this warm and friendly school, where staff are highly ambitious for all children. Pupils express pride in being part of a community where 'everyone fits' and friendships are easy to make. The shared motto, 'I can, we can, Stokesay can', shapes

pupils' attitudes and experiences. Pupils show confidence in themselves, belief in one another and pride in their school. They know they are supported to succeed, both academically and personally.

Pupils achieve well and enjoy learning. They speak positively about lessons, describing them as interesting, purposeful and easy to follow. Teachers know pupils' starting points well and plan learning that builds knowledge over time. From early reading and phonics through to confident writing, mathematical reasoning and rich learning across the wider curriculum, pupils develop firm foundations for future learning. They achieve outcomes in national assessments that are above national averages. This is particularly notable given the barriers many pupils face. Disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those requiring additional pastoral support make sustained progress. This is because leaders identify needs early and provide timely, well-targeted support without lowering expectations.

There are positive relationships between pupils and staff. Differences are accepted and celebrated and pupils feel safe to be themselves. Enrichment opportunities further strengthen this sense of community. These include clubs, sports, outside learning, educational visits, residential experiences and caring roles, such as the Dog Squad. These experiences help pupils feel connected and valued.

Pupils thrive in a calm and purposeful environment. Behaviour is consistently respectful, attendance is high and pupils feel safe. Bullying is very rare and pupils know that adults will deal with any concerns quickly and effectively. Through assemblies, leadership roles and community activities, pupils learn how to contribute positively to school, local and national life. As a result, pupils leave Stokesay well prepared and confident for their future in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should continue to strengthen and refine their work across all areas, ensuring that improvements are sustainable over time so that they continue to have a transformational impact on outcomes for all pupils.

About this inspection

Information about the Inspection:

This school is part of the TrustEd Schools Alliance, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sarah Godden, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Anderson.

The executive headteacher is Paul O'Malley.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, including the executive headteacher, head of school, pastoral lead and the special educational needs coordinator. They also spoke with representatives of the trust, including the CEO, and representatives of the trust board and local governing committee, including the chair of governors.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Head of school: Will Vaughan

Lead inspector:

Su Plant, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Liz Vautier-Thomas, Ofsted Inspector

Shelley Reeves-Walters, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

167

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

210

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

25.68%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.99%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

3.59%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	79%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	88%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	83%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	93%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	90%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	79%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	85%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	83%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	87%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	56%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	63%	44%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	88%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	88%	60%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	56%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	63%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	75%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	75%	59%	Above

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	56%	68%	-11 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	63%	66%	-4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	88%	80%	8 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	88%	78%	9 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	56%	78%	-22 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	63%	77%	-15 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	75%	80%	-5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	75%	79%	-4 pp

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.6%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	13.0%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	17.3%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	27.7%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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