

Inspection of Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School

St Edward's Drive, Stow-on-the-Wold, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL54 1AW

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The values of 'heart, hand and mind' are threaded through school life. Pupils are kind, responsible and have a willingness to do well. Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils strive to meet these expectations. There is a commitment to developing a sense of belonging in each pupil at this nurturing and inclusive school. For example, to promote inclusivity, pupils take part in an annual 'pea scramble'. In their house teams they compete to collect the most dried peas in jars.

The school is well respected within the parent community. It has strong links with local nursing homes. Pupils learn about dementia as part of the school's curriculum. Younger and older pupils present their learning, such as poetry and nursery rhymes. They become familiar faces to the residents. Pupils develop respect for others and appreciate being 'dementia friends'.

The school champions each pupil as an individual. Pupils get a broad range of wider experiences to spark new interests. French, rounders, gardening and cooking clubs are on offer to pupils. Visitors talk to the pupils about their important roles, such as fire and police officers.

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

The school has created a well-structured curriculum that sets out the most important knowledge pupils need to know in many subjects. This helps pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), build their knowledge well. For example, in art, artistic styles and how to recreate them are set out so that pupils can practise their skills. Because of this, pupils demonstrate strong knowledge of these styles in their work. They are able to talk about their learning, such as the key features of street art created by Banksy. However, in some wider curriculum subjects, the small steps of learning are not as clear. This means some pupils do not build knowledge based on previous learning and cannot remember their learning as well.

Children learn to read as soon as they start school. Staff have had training in the school's reading programme and ensure any child who needs additional support gets it quickly. Children read books that contain the sounds they are confident with. This means they become confident readers. 'Language llama' teddies support pupils to learn and use vocabulary in their work. Children in the early years benefit from adults using this vocabulary, such as 'change' and 'subtract' when playing a toy shop game as part of their mathematics learning. This encourages children to use this language in their play. The school aims for pupils to become lifelong readers. Staff promote enjoyment of reading through special fireside story times with hot chocolate in pyjamas. Consequently, children associate reading with being an enjoyable and calming activity.

In many subjects, teaching is designed to help pupils remember their learning. Questioning enables teachers to find out what pupils do and do not know. They modify lessons accordingly to secure pupils' knowledge. On occasion, however, assessment is not used as well. Assessment is carried out, but it is not used to inform the curriculum being taught to pupils. This means some pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as they could in these areas.

The school rules of 'be safe, be supportive and persevere' are well known by pupils. These help to guide their behaviour. Bespoke behaviour plans provide additional support to those who need it. Leaders are thorough in their analysis and innovative in their approach to address poor attendance. As a result, attendance is above national levels.

The school's personal development programme is well-established. The school has thoughtfully woven enrichment opportunities throughout the curriculum. Pupils take part in sculpture workshops as part of their art curriculum and visit Bletchley Park as part of history learning. Visitors from different backgrounds talk about their beliefs and celebrations. Pupils try new foods as part of a street food evening to celebrate Diwali. Pupils learn about how to keep mentally well through activities such as 'making connections' week. This is where pupils reach out to people they may not normally engage with.

Leaders and governors have created a culture of democracy in the way the school is developed. The headteacher skilfully consults parents on their children's education and is strongly supported by parents. Staff make valued contributions to the school development plan. Pupils present to governors at their meetings. These actions generate commitment from everyone involved to provide an educational experience in which pupils can succeed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of wider curriculum subjects, the important knowledge leaders want pupils to know is not clear. This means some pupils do not build their knowledge well. The school should sequence the small steps of knowledge it wants pupils to learn at each stage so that pupils remember their learning.
- Assessment in some subjects is not used effectively to inform the next steps in learning. This means some pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as they could. The school should ensure that assessment is used to inform future teaching so that pupils know and remember more over time.

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

Unique reference number	115540
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10307244
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Trudy Bartlett
Headteacher	Rebecca Scutt
Website	www.stowprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is a before-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff, parents, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, 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.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes. In addition, the inspectors met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Malcolm Willis

Ofsted Inspector

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