

Inspection of a good school: Stebbing Primary School

High Street, Stebbing, Dunmow, Essex CM6 3SH

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 December 2022

Outcome

Stebbing Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Stebbing Primary School. They enjoy the subjects they learn and the lessons they have. Pupils are eager to work hard to reach the high expectations all staff have of them. They love the opportunities leaders provide them to hold positions of responsibility. School councillors, house leaders and house captains relish their jobs and take them seriously.

Pupils look after each other at school. Older pupils enjoy acting as 'buddies' for younger children in Reception. This helps the youngest children to develop confidence when they start school but also teaches older pupils how to be responsible. During lessons, most pupils behave well. Most also behave well during breaktime and lunchtime. Pupils know there are many adults they can talk to if they have worries. They know that these adults will help them with their well-being. Pupils are confident that on the rare occasions bullying happens, staff will be quick to deal with it.

Pupils appreciate the many opportunities leaders give them to attend school clubs. They also value the wide range of trips and visits they have. These help to teach pupils more about the topics they learn in school.

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

Leaders have carefully designed a curriculum that builds on what pupils know and can do. This provides pupils with opportunities to develop their knowledge in all subjects. Teachers teach the curriculum well. They have good subject knowledge. Support staff also have secure subject knowledge and support pupils effectively in class and during interventions.

Children in Reception start learning to read as soon as they begin school. They have opportunities to listen to, and practise, the sounds that letters make. Children quickly learn to blend sounds together so they can read words accurately. Staff teach phonics well. They identify pupils who find reading hard. Staff then provide extra support for

pupils to help them become fluent. Teachers carefully match reading books to the sounds pupils know and can read. This helps to develop pupils' confidence when reading. Pupils enjoy reading. They especially like the stories that teachers read to them.

In English and mathematics, teachers check pupils' understanding of what they have learned. They use these checks to help them plan future learning and to put extra support in place. For example, in mathematics, teachers and support staff will revisit areas of the curriculum pupils have misunderstood. However, leaders have not developed a consistent approach to checks on learning in other subjects. This means that in these subjects, teachers and subject leaders do not adapt the curriculum to what pupils need to revisit or move on to as precisely as they do in English and mathematics.

Children in Reception achieve well in all areas of the early years curriculum. Staff match resources carefully to the planned curriculum. This provides children with opportunities to develop across all areas of learning. Children quickly settle into the routines of the school. Adults model high-quality vocabulary to children, which helps to develop their understanding of language.

Leaders have trained all staff on how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff make careful adaptations to the curriculum where they need to. This means that pupils with SEND experience the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders have prioritised the wider development of pupils. A range of trips, clubs, visitors and opportunities to perform in plays helps to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils feel especially well supported with their well-being. Leaders have designed 'five ways to well-being' and pupils use them to help them when they need to. The school's 'steps' challenge inspires pupils to complete a range of challenges both at school and at home. Pupils appreciate the certificates and badges they receive when they complete them.

Governors know what the school does well and what leaders are trying to improve. Governors hold leaders to account. They monitor the progress leaders are making towards achieving the priorities they have set to improve the school. Leaders ensure that staff feel well supported at school. Staff appreciate the support they get for their own well-being. They are proud to work at the school. Leaders work effectively with parents. Parents are very positive about the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand how to spot the signs a pupil may be at risk of harm. They report any concerns quickly and follow the school's agreed procedures. Records relating to concerns raised are thorough and detailed. Leaders ensure they take any required follow-up action in a timely manner. They engage external professionals where required to support pupils who are vulnerable. The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep safe online. Pupils understand what they have learned.

Leaders complete all required pre-employment checks on adults new to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In subjects other than English and mathematics, there is not an embedded approach to assessment. This means that in some subjects, teachers and subject leaders do not always have a clear understanding of what pupils know and can do. Leaders must ensure they establish a clear and consistent approach to checking pupils' learning so that teachers and subject leaders have an accurate view of what pupils know and can do in all subjects. They must then use these checks to adapt the curriculum appropriately.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

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	114888
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10255062
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	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephanie Taylor
Headteacher	Lucy Mawson
Website	www.stebbingprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.
- There is an externally run Nursery on site.
- The school makes use of one unregistered 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 impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised safeguarding policies, the school's record of background checks of adults at the school and a sample

of child protection files. The inspector also spoke with governors, leaders, the designated safeguarding lead and staff about safeguarding practices at the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, staff, governors and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, pupil records, minutes of governing body meetings, governor monitoring reports, local authority monitoring reports, school development plans and school policies.
- There were 113 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, which were considered alongside 67 free-text responses.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. The inspector spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- There were 40 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff. The inspector also spoke with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Michael Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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