

# Inspection of Stoke Primary Academy

Allhallows Road, Lower Stoke, Rochester, Kent ME3 9SL

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Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy learning at Stoke Primary Academy. School leaders are aspirational for pupils. Teachers build very positive relationships with pupils and stretch their understanding through careful questioning.

Pupils behave well and enjoy the company of their friends. They are encouraged to explore their feelings and ideas, for example through class 'bubble books'. While a few pupils say that bullying can occur at the school, they are confident that the staff quickly help. This makes pupils feel safe.

School leaders have strengthened the curriculum considerably since the previous inspection. The curriculum helps pupils to think about their place in the world. Children get off to a good start in early years where staff build their confidence through play. As pupils move through the school, they play a part in discussions about what they need to learn next. This helps to make sure that learning is both interesting and memorable.

Pupils have not always achieved well in reading. With leaders' renewed focus on reading and phonics, any pupils who have fallen behind are now catching up. Pupils now show a love of reading and are keen to talk about the books they read.

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

The multi-academy trust has brought about swift improvements. Trust staff support teachers in class and work alongside the headteacher. Trustees and governors ask challenging questions that help make improvements, for example to the curriculum. Subject leaders value the support they receive to build their leadership skills.

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum. Pupils experience a broad range of subjects that fire their interest. Teachers pay careful attention to what they teach when, and encourage pupils to think about what they already know. This helps pupils to make sense of what they are learning. This works really well in science, where pupils develop questioning skills that help them to be inquisitive. Teachers make helpful links across subjects that build pupils' understanding. For example, in computing pupils use their scientific and design and technology knowledge to make films. But not all subjects have clear-enough steps in learning. In art and music, for example, pupils enjoy their learning. However, they do not have enough opportunities to learn about and appreciate the work of others or develop key vocabulary.

Leaders have worked diligently to make sure that all teachers have the knowledge to teach reading and comprehension well. A new approach to teaching phonics this school year has had a marked impact on pupils' reading skills. Pupils use their phonics and reading skills to help them to learn across a broad range of subjects. Pupils read often and teachers share their love of stories, poems and other books

with pupils. While pupils enjoy taking books home to read, not all parents and carers are clear about how the school teaches their children to read.

Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Adults help them to learn alongside their peers in class. This encourages pupils with SEND to make similar progress to their peers across a broad range of subjects. Pupils who need support for their anxiety meet with the therapy dog who visits the school. This has helped pupils with SEND to manage their feelings and focus better in class.

The wider curriculum helps pupils to see themselves as global citizens. For example, pupils who were learning about plastic pollution wrote a letter to their local cinema to encourage more recycling. Pupils join in a range of school clubs, with many disadvantaged pupils attending.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They are attentive in class and speak respectfully to one another and to adults. Behaviour systems in the school are fair. This helps the few pupils whose behaviour occasionally falls below expectations to improve. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have moved in the past year to be taught in single year group classes in the Allhallows site. Pupils manage this transition well. Staff help pupils to settle into their new class and leaders make sure the expectations for pupils are the same across both sites. Pupils' attendance is getting better because leaders support pupils and their families when attendance is low.

Staff in early years create an environment that encourages children to be inquisitive. There is a sharp focus on developing the vocabulary they need to communicate well and support their learning. Children in the early years develop positive attitudes to learning. They are comfortable in the company of other children and trust adults.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe and trust that adults in school listen to any worries they have. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and understand the dangers posed by communicating with others using social media.

Parents are confident that the school cares for their children. Staff raise any concerns about pupils' well-being swiftly and report this to the designated safeguarding lead. This keeps pupils safe and provides swift help for families who need support. Careful records are kept to make sure all adults in the school are safe to work with children.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is mostly clearly sequenced to help pupils gain knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of subjects. In some subjects, such as art and music, the sequence of learning is not yet clear enough. Leaders should ensure that learning is clearly sequenced and sufficiently broad so that pupils know and remember more.
- There are clear structures in the sequence of teaching in both phonics and reading skills in school. However, parents are not all clear how the school teaches their children to read, so do not know how best to support reading at home. Leaders and teachers need to help parents to understand how the school teaches their children to read, so parents can support what is learned in school at home.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141553
<b>Local authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122202
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	83
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Leigh Academies Trust
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Bob Findlay
<b>Principal</b>	Lucie Wilson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stoke.medway.sch.uk/">http://www.stoke.medway.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12–13 September 2017

## Information about this school

- The school joined Leigh Academies Trust in January 2019. The Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are educated off site at Allhallows Primary Academy. The principal also leads that school.

## Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the principal and with a range of senior and curriculum leaders. We met with the executive principal and with various trust leaders working in the school. We met with the special educational needs coordinator and the assessment and progress lead. We considered the views of nine staff who responded to the staff survey.
- We held meetings with the trustees and governors, the trust chief executive officer and academies director.
- We examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school's own plan for improvement, governance documents, attendance and behaviour records and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

- We reviewed safeguarding training records and met with the school's safeguarding lead.
- We met with parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of parents through the 14 responses to Ofsted's Parent View.
- We considered the views of pupils, including 32 responses to the pupil survey.
- We did deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and computing. These deep dives consisted of linked activities to gather evidence about how well pupils are helped to gain knowledge and skills. As part of these, we talked to subject leaders, reviewed pupils' work, visited lessons with senior leaders and spoke to pupils and teachers. We heard pupils read, observed adults reading to pupils, visited reading lessons and talked to pupils about reading. We also reviewed the curriculum planning and workbooks in a selection of other subjects.

### **Inspection team**

Graham Chisnell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Shields

Ofsted Inspector

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