

# Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Stockham Primary School

Stockham Way, Wantage, Oxfordshire OX12 9HL

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Inspection dates: 3 and 4 June 2025

## Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a community where pupils are treated fairly and feel valued. Positive working relationships exist between staff and pupils. This ensures that pupils feel safe.

The school has experienced significant turbulence in recent years. Although improving, there are variances in the implementation of the curriculum and the quality of education. The school is taking action to address this. However, it is too soon to see demonstrable impact. Published national test outcomes are in line with the national average.

Pupils are polite and courteous and enjoy being in school. Pupils generally behave well but sometimes can be too easily distracted in lessons when teaching is not as focused as it could be. The school is working to ensure that all staff have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. In some subjects, pupils develop a better understanding of what they have learned. In other subjects, pupils' knowledge is more variable. This is because the delivery of the intended curriculum is inconsistent in these areas.

Pupils have access to a range of wider opportunities. This includes an impressive variety of sports. Older pupils can choose to take on different leadership opportunities, for example being a sports leader or reading ambassador. These opportunities help prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

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

The school's curriculum meets the expectations set out in the national curriculum. However, at times, the curriculum is not as clear as it could be. This includes in the early years. Pupils do not always study subject content in a well-thought-out order. This means that important knowledge and skills are not regularly reinforced. Leaders are working to improve the quality of education across the school. Some of this work is at an early stage.

Teachers typically have secure subject knowledge and present new information clearly. When questions asked of pupils in lessons are effective, they promote appropriate discussions about what is being learned. However, some activities in lessons do not ensure that pupils practise and master what they are learning in sufficient depth. Teaching does not routinely check pupils' understanding and address misconceptions. As a result, some pupils move on to new content before they have a secure understanding of what they have learned before. This means that, too often, pupils have gaps in their understanding. The quality of pupils' work in books does not sufficiently show the depth of learning that is intended.

The school has considered carefully how to support the teaching of early reading. Leaders have accurately identified where the teaching of phonics can improve. The school is now supporting pupils who lack confidence in their reading with more precision. The school prioritises reading for pleasure. Pupils enjoy reading a diverse and challenging range of texts. They appreciate why reading is important and how it can make them better writers.

The school is making clear improvements in its work to identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers are now guided far more effectively on how to adapt their teaching so that all pupils can access an ambitious curriculum. However, the impact of this support is not yet embedded.

Pupils behave well in lessons but sometimes do not consistently display positive attitudes to their learning. Where curriculum delivery is strong and appropriate adaptations are made, pupils, including those with SEND, are more likely to be engaged and focused on what they are learning. Recent changes in the early years have made the learning environment more welcoming and focused.

Promoting high attendance is a growing priority in the school. Leaders are aware that some pupils who are persistently absent need even more support to improve their attendance.

The school has designed a thorough and age-appropriate personal development programme. Leaders have considered carefully the risks that pupils in the school may face and encourage pupils to keep themselves safe and healthy. Sensitive subjects such as consent are taught with care. The school organises a range of experiences and outings for pupils. These include visits in the local area, curriculum workshops and residentials in outdoor activity centres. All pupils are supported to become involved with wider school life. Pupils are positive about contributing to the wider community by raising money for local and national charities.

Leaders know that more work is needed to ensure the whole school community, including parents and carers, have full confidence in the quality of educational provision. Staff are beginning to feel more positive. Governors know their school well and are very aware of the current challenges it faces. They appreciate that while the school has many strengths, there needs to be stronger provision across a number of areas. Governors have put in place appropriate support to ensure that leaders' accurate identification of the essential issues result in swift action being taken.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school's curriculum is not being implemented consistently well. Teaching is not checking pupils' learning with enough rigour. Pupils have gaps in their understanding of important skills and knowledge. This prevents them from showing a greater depth of understanding in their work. The school should develop staff expertise to deliver the curriculum well to support pupils to learn effectively across the curriculum.
- Teaching is not adapted sufficiently to ensure that vulnerable pupils' needs are met. As a result, some pupils, including pupils with SEND, cannot access the learning. When this happens, too many pupils lose focus and become distracted. The school should ensure that there are consistently high expectations for all pupils, and that the curriculum is adapted effectively so that pupils learn and achieve well.
- The school has experienced significant turbulence in leadership and management. This has had an impact on leaders' abilities to monitor the quality of provision effectively. Consequently, variations in the quality of education and behaviour are only just beginning to be addressed. The work now needs more time to embed. The school should check and provide support for staff to ensure that the curriculum is implemented as intended.

## 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 outstanding 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in March 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123072
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10341545
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Katy Radburn-Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vikki Marsh-Ballard
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stockham.oxon.sch.uk">www.stockham.oxon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision, which is delivered on site.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

## 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The headteacher was not present during the inspection.
- The inspector met with school leaders and other senior staff.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils about their learning.

- 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.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Susan Maguire, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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