

Inspection of a good school: Stokesley Primary Academy

5 Springfield, Stokesley, Middlesbrough TS9 5EW

Inspection dates:

2–3 October 2019

Outcome

Stokesley Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to attend this school. They told me that teachers make learning interesting and fun. Pupils wear their uniform with pride. They say that teachers encourage them to work hard and strive to achieve well. Pupils and teachers work well together and respect each other. Pupils can share their ideas, ask questions and take risks when work is challenging.

Pupils take part in many high-quality experiences outside of lessons. They are proud to showcase their talents in school performances of musical theatre, drama and choir. A high proportion of pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs and sporting events. They talk with pride about being finalists in a recent hockey tournament with local schools.

All pupils who spoke to me said that they feel safe, including when they are online. Pupils behave well. They say that bullying is not a problem because teachers sort out any instances related to poor behaviour. Pupils are proud of their roles and responsibilities. For example, the school ambassadors talk with pride about being positive role models for other pupils in school.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Pupils come to school eager to learn and with positive attitudes. Leaders sequence the long-term plans for all curriculum subjects across the school. Teachers are very clear on what they have to teach, and in what order. Pupils build on what they already know and can do as they move through the year groups. For example, pupils told me how doubling and halving learned in key stage 1 helped them do fractions in key stage 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average.

Teachers and teaching assistants have secure subject knowledge. Teachers adapt their short-term plans based on how well the children learn. In English and mathematics, pupils find it easy to catch up by revisiting parts of the curriculum. In other curriculum subjects, this is less successful. This is because some pupils miss too many days at school or take

holidays during term time. Leaders take a firm stance on tackling this matter, including issuing fines. Many pupils join or leave the school at different points throughout the school year. As a result, those pupils can find it difficult to build on what they remember from previous learning.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Some pupils use special resources or access adult support in a small group. Leaders check on the progress that pupils make, which is good. Where possible, pupils with SEND access the same work as other pupils.

Pupils with responsibilities are positive role models. Staff encourage pupils to be curious and creative. Pupils take part in a range of cultural visits and activities beyond their own experiences. Novels and stories which support curriculum subjects help pupils to gain wider cultural knowledge.

Pupils get off to a good start in Reception to learn their letters and sounds. Teachers use books of a high quality with pupils to instil a love of reading. Pupils develop a wide vocabulary through their reading. Pupils in the earliest stages of reading take a while to catch up to other pupils. A new leader of phonics has made sure there is a sharp focus on the pupils who are falling behind. Some of these pupils have recently joined this school. Others have special educational needs. Pupils in this group can use their knowledge of letters and sounds to build up words. They need to practise their early reading skills to become confident, fluent readers.

Leaders appreciate the support and challenge that they receive through the multi-academy trust. Curriculum leaders have accessed relevant training. Teachers from schools across the trust meet to check that their view of pupils' work is accurate.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive training to make sure they recognise the signs of abuse or neglect. Staff know that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. The designated leader of safeguarding has improved the system for recording concerns. Staff say this has helped them to be clear of the actions required if a child is at risk.

Leaders have effective systems in place to check that absent pupils are safe. Leaders have compelling evidence that they provide strong support for vulnerable pupils. Case studies considered during the inspection show improvements in pupils' attendance and achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to develop some areas of the curriculum to support the pupils who join the school at a different starting point or who have had historical low attendance. Leaders need to ensure that pupils are helped to develop their knowledge and understanding to get them to know more and remember more.
- Phonics is generally taught well. Leaders monitor pupils' progress in phonics closely. The recently appointed leader recognised that a sharper focus was required on the pupils who were falling behind. The leader needs to continue to implement the new approach to support the lowest attainers to catch up quickly.
- Although leaders are tackling absence rates, which are below average, too many pupils remain absent from school. Leaders need to improve attendance, including that of persistent absentees and the number of holidays taken during term time. Pupils need to attend school more regularly to reduce the gaps in their knowledge over time.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Stokesley Community Primary School, to be good on 6–7 October 2015.

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 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

Unique reference number	143612
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10097571
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of Governors	Julie Grant
Principal	Scott McFarlane
Website	www.stokesley.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. It joined the Enquire Learning Trust in November 2016.
- The school has a Nursery class and provides full and part-time places. The school provides places for children who are two years old.
- Before- and after-school care is provided on site by Stokesley Kids Club.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who receive support for their special educational needs is below average.
- The predecessor school was last inspected in October 2015. It was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the principal, the deputy principal, the special educational needs coordinator and curriculum leaders. I held meetings with the chief executive officer, the director of school improvement, the chair of the local governing board, and the school business manager.

- I closely focused on reading, mathematics and history in this inspection. I visited lessons and talked to some of the pupils and teachers from the lessons. I met with senior and curriculum leaders and we looked at pupils' work in books together.
- I checked documents relating to safeguarding. These included training records. I looked at safeguarding policies and procedures. I talked to staff about their role in keeping pupils safe.
- I checked recorded behaviour incidents, including leaders' actions to resolve any issues. Attendance and exclusion rates were also considered.
- I observed playtime and lunchtime. I talked to children about what it is like to be a pupil in this school.
- I met with staff to discuss the training they have received, the support they have from leaders and how workload is managed.
- I took account of the 42 responses to Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments.

Inspection team

Alison Aitchison, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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