

# Stoke Hill Infants and Nursery School

Stoke Hill, Exeter, Devon, EX4 7DB

**Inspection dates** 8–9 July 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Stoke Hill Infant and Nursery is an outstanding school where all feel valued. It sustains a very welcoming atmosphere within its caring and increasingly multicultural community.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The much respected and skilled headteacher is extremely well supported by senior staff and by the federation's very effective single governing body. They work as a highly efficient team to sustain excellent teaching and pupils' achievement. Leaders also continue a strong, and often innovative, drive for further improvement.
- The school has improved well since the previous inspection. For example, outdoor learning for children in Reception is now a significant strength.
- Pupils in all classes enjoy learning in a variety of stimulating ways and this strongly promotes their excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically excellent. Pupils have very meaningful relationships with each other and with caring adults in the school. Consequently, pupils greatly enjoy attending. Highly supportive relationships between parents and staff also boost pupils' confidence and enrich their learning at home and at school.
- The school's work in keeping pupils safe and secure is outstanding. As a result, pupils feel very safe and behave extremely well.
- Teaching is outstanding. Typically, teachers use a range of very effective methods that significantly extends pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils across the range of abilities, including an increasing number who speak English as an additional language, make excellent progress from different starting points.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. National assessments at the end of Year 2 over the past three years have been well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A high proportion of pupils have higher levels of skill than normally expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Many pupils also show advanced skills for their age in speaking and listening and in science.
- Children achieve extremely well in the high quality Nursery and Reception early years provision.
- The school's high quality and relevant range of activities enthuses all pupils equally. It also greatly promotes their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors looked at learning in 21 lessons, and saw the work of 16 teachers. The inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher and deputy headteacher during most of these observations.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, and the school’s analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. Records of checks on the quality of teaching were examined, along with details of visits to the school made by the local authority.
- The inspectors talked to pupils about their work, and listened to individual pupils from Reception and Years 1 and 2 read. They also looked at samples of pupils’ work across a range of subjects and classes, especially writing.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils, including members of the school council. Inspectors spoke to individual pupils in lessons and around the school. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with an adviser from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed in 112 online responses to the Parent View questionnaire and informal meetings with parents during the inspection. Inspectors also considered four letters from parents. Questionnaires completed by 40 members of staff were also analysed.
- The inspectors evaluated the school’s use of primary sport funding.
- Inspectors examined the school’s work in updating procedures for checking pupils’ progress within the revised National Curriculum.

## Inspection team

Alexander Baxter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Barron	Additional Inspector
Paul Hodson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This infant and nursery school, which caters for pupils aged three to seven years, is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after) is below average.
- Early years children attend the school's Nursery on a part-time basis. Approximately one third of these children then transfers into the three Reception classes on a full-time basis.
- The school operates its own breakfast and afternoon clubs in partnership with the adjacent junior school.
- The school federated with Stoke Hill Junior School in September 2010. Each school retains its own headteacher. One governing body oversees the work of both schools in the federation.

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

- Help pupils further to see how their different skills and abilities can develop when they undertake their learning activities.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's expert knowledge of her school and passionate promotion its values of 'Inspire, Discover and Succeed' underpin the school's outstanding leadership. Over time, leaders at all levels, including the federation's single board of governors, have sustained a positive momentum of improvement. They have secured a culture where excellent teaching and pupils' behaviour can flourish.
- Leaders at all levels and in all parts of the school ensure that pupils are safe, enjoy equal opportunity and are kept free from discrimination. The school's procedures to supervise pupils in various activities take full account of the school's stimulating facilities. These include careful supervision for pupils as they are taken and brought back from the well-managed breakfast and after-school clubs. Leaders ensure that they fully meet statutory requirements relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- The headteacher's and deputy headteacher's strong partnership promotes good teamwork among staff and governors. Senior leaders work closely with governors and, together, they challenge and support staff leaders in a very effective and well-balanced way.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and areas to develop extremely well. Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have turned relative weaknesses into consistent strengths. These included better challenge for pupils of different abilities and improving outdoor learning for children in Reception. Pupils' progress has improved as a result. The school continues to improve.
- This academic year, leaders have continued the drive to make better use of wider leadership skills across the federation. For example, this has ensured exemplary assistance for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. It also supports smooth arrangements for Year 2 pupils when they transfer into the junior school.
- Middle leaders have developed their skills and work very effectively with senior leaders to check and sustain successful teaching and pupils' learning across the school. Committed staff liaise well with their colleagues in the partner school, which support them in carrying out their roles.
- Senior leaders check the performance of teachers and other staff very rigorously and staff respond very positively to opportunities to develop their skills. The headteacher uses information from observations of teaching to ensure that staff pay links with raising pupils' achievements.
- Staff share very friendly relationships with parents, especially at the start and end of each day. Governors also assist in promoting excellent links with parents that furthermore help to sustain high aspirations for pupils' academic and personal achievement. The large number of parents attending school events and the vast majority of positive views received from parents during the inspection reflect this strong partnership.
- Leaders have also improved the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, to provide excellent support for disadvantaged pupils. This includes additional training for staff, earlier checks of pupils' abilities and more specifically focused additional adult help. These highly effective developments have quickened the progress of disadvantaged pupils and also those who are learning to speak English as an additional language. As a result, across the school, all groups of pupils achieve exceedingly well in relation to their different needs and starting points.
- The school uses the primary school sport funding very efficiently to enrich its already comprehensive range of sports clubs. The school makes full use of the skills of a physical education specialist to train staff and increase pupils' skills and fitness through participation in sports. For example, this year more girls are taking part in the football club and nearly three quarters of the pupils at the school now attend at least one sports club, a 16% increase over the previous year.
- Teachers plan a wide range of learning activities and promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development exceptionally well. Activities are broad based and designed to extend pupils' experiences and thinking through stimulating learning, both in classes and outdoors. These activities include, for example, awe-inspiring outdoor learning in the school's woodland walks and wildlife area. Pupils further develop a respect for the natural world through, for example, gardening and keeping poultry.
- Staff place a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' sense of community during federation assemblies and reflection times in lessons. Teachers utilise the cultural richness of the pupils' diverse backgrounds to secure their tolerance and respect for the different beliefs and values in modern Britain.
- Pupils further develop an understanding of British values through elections to the school council. Pupils also learn about 'fair play' during events such as sports days. Pupils take a lead in establishing their own clubs, such as the geography club, and learn to respect the views of others through their class discussions.
- The local authority continues to provide effective training opportunities for governors and to assist staff in

developing their coaching skills in support of colleagues across the federation.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are very effective in their role. They have continued to update and widen their skills through regular training and by welcoming new members from a variety of backgrounds and with a wealth of expertise. The governors' partnership with leaders and staff from both schools in the federation in sharing their skills has also strengthened their role. Governors fulfil their statutory obligations, including safeguarding, to keep pupils safe. Governors produce their own reviews of the work of the school following first hand visits to the school. They receive detailed written reports and frequent presentations from staff leaders. They examine these reports carefully. This enables them to secure very efficient use of the pupil premium and sport funding. Governors also question leaders closely and, in particular, hold them to account in ensuring that teaching links to quickening pupils' progress. They know that checks ensure that good teaching is rewarded and weaker teaching is swiftly addressed. Governors check information on pupils' progress effectively. They know that pupils' attainments at the end of Year 2 have been sustained at a well above average level in relation to schools locally and nationally. Governors play a very supportive role in sustaining excellent links with parents. They strongly support the headteacher in maintaining the school's welcoming multicultural community atmosphere.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' attitudes to learning are impeccable and have a significantly beneficial impact on their learning and progress. Pupils respond very respectfully and obediently to the teachers' consistently high expectations of their behaviour. They are very eager to learn and please their teachers.
- Pupils enjoy very supportive relationships with each other and with adults to enrich each other's progress. Pupils of all ages, including children in the Nursery and Reception classes, quickly learn how to work and play effectively together.
- The pupils' behaviour is equally outstanding in class or outdoors. Pupils show great interest in their work and persevere in sustaining their concentration when working with, or without, close assistance from adults.
- Pupils, without reservation, are extremely proud of their school. Parents also comment about their children's eagerness to arrive at school each day. Pupils particularly value the stimulating and wide range of outdoor learning opportunities provided for them.
- Pupils enjoy their time in the well-organised breakfast and after-school clubs. They say, 'We have fun and meet our friends.' The pupils' great enjoyment of school is also seen in their above average attendance, reflecting the excellent partnership between parents and the school.
- Pupils take great care with their presentation of work, especially their handwriting, which is evident in their work in books and on display around the school.
- Pupils welcome visitors to the school in a friendly manner and talk with confidence about the work they do. Pupils undertake their various roles of responsibility diligently. For example, older pupils help to keep the hall clean at lunchtimes and pupils elected to the school council represent the views of their classmates respectfully and responsibly.
- Pupils on the school council and other pupils say, 'Teachers care about what we have to say.' Older Year 2 pupils particularly appreciate the way teachers have helped them to get ready for the move into the junior school next term.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Leaders and managers ensure that all staff are fully trained and supported in fully implementing the school's comprehensive safeguarding procedures. Pupils understand the well-established routines and know that school rules need to be followed so that everyone is kept safe.
- Pupils are particularly knowledgeable for their age about e-safety and help each other to stay safe when using computers. Older pupils act as 'playtime buddies' and fulfil their roles, which also include helping other pupils to stay safe, with great care.
- Pupils know about bullying and its different forms, for example that people can be bullied just as badly by words as well as by being physically hurt. Pupils say there is no bullying. 'We help each other and have no problems with behaviour and so we feel very safe at this school.' Pupils also say, 'Teachers look after us so well.' School records and parents support this view.

**The quality of teaching****is outstanding**

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is outstanding across the school.
- The degree to which pupils are engrossed in their work is plain to see. Pupils work extremely well together, confidently discussing the tasks and sharing equipment very helpfully to enrich each other's learning as well as their own.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work extremely well together. They also liaise closely with colleagues within year groups and key stages to secure consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work.
- Pupils develop a clear understanding of how school rules and class routines keep them safe and help them to learn. As a result, pupils settle quickly into learning in lessons. For example, pupils heed and respond well to frequent reminders from adults about how to use equipment such as computers appropriately.
- Although clearly eager to begin their work, pupils in all classes listen carefully when teachers explain the different activities planned for them. Pupils appreciate the supportive guidance they receive from adults.
- Teachers mostly make good links with previous work to help pupils to think about how to improve their work. Occasionally though, pupils do not have a clear understanding of which skills they need to improve to help them learn even better. This sometimes delays learning until the staff's subsequent checks provide extra guidance. Even so, pupils readily give of their best, persevere in their work and learn exceptionally well.
- Pupils respond eagerly to teachers' questions in lessons and enrich each other's learning by willingly sharing their ideas. For example, pupils in Year 1 exchanged their knowledge and views about the different animals found in Australia to enrich their descriptive writing.
- Parents hold the quality of teaching in the school in high regard. They work well with teachers in helping their children with homework, especially to enjoy books and reading. Parents also support the school's efforts to keep pupils safe, including when using computers and many attend the parent workshops.
- Teachers in all classes have increased the emphasis on stimulating pupils' learning outdoors since the previous inspection. This has raised the pupils' interest and engagement in learning very successfully, notably for boys who now work as hard and achieve just as well as the girls.
- Practical problem solving is one key feature of the excellent teaching of mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 2 cooperated very supportively and persevered with determination to accurately measure the playground using measuring wheels and metre sticks. The teachers' timely questioning and guidance further advanced the pupils' understanding of metric measures.
- Pupils also greatly enjoy the frequent gardening activities and investigations in the school's wildlife areas. Teachers promote and build on the pupils' enthusiasm and interact with pupils effectively to extend their spoken vocabulary. Pupils have sharp observational skills and respond to their teachers' ideas and questions quickly as they are very interested in their activities. For example, pupils rushed to point out ripening blackberries or newly created spiders' webs to adults at break times.
- By sharing expertise with colleagues across the federation, teachers have secured more consistency than in the past in the way they check pupils' progress.
- Teachers mark the pupils' work carefully and ensure their excellent progress by making sure that pupils have effective guidance and encouragement. Writing is taught very well. The pupils' positive response to the teachers' skilled guidance is clearly evident in the excellent development of cursive handwriting and coherent sentences.
- The teaching of reading is a strength in all classes. Teachers develop phonics (sounds that letters make) specifically every day. Teachers and teaching assistants also take every opportunity during the day to extend pupils' phonic (letter sounds) awareness, for example pronouncing names of plants and leaves correctly.

**The achievement of pupils****is outstanding**

- The school has sustained above average levels of attainment in reading, writing, and mathematics at the end of Year 2 over the past three years. School-based assessments also show continuing above average proportions of pupils exceeding national expectations in the Year 1 phonic checks. These represent a clear track record of pupils' outstanding progress through Key Stage 1 in response to excellent teaching.
- Checks of children's progress and achievement during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes show an above average proportion reaches a good level of development. This is seen in all areas of learning at the end of Reception and shows equally outstanding achievement by the children during their

early years in the school.

- This year's school and inspection checks of pupils' work through Years 1 and 2 also show high proportions reaching higher levels of skill for their age and making faster than expected progress. This is equally the case in all classes in reading, writing, and mathematics, and further illustrates pupils' continuing outstanding achievement during their time in this school.
- Teachers ensure that the most able pupils have suitably challenging work that promotes their thinking and their skills. For example, during mathematics in Year 2, pupils thought carefully about how to mentally add units, tens, and hundreds to correctly solve number and money problems.
- Leaders and staff across both schools in the federation fully share their expertise in supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They liaise very closely with outside professionals and parents. This ensures that these pupils have their needs assessed accurately and are supported extremely effectively. As a result, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make excellent progress and achieve extremely well in relation to their needs and starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils entitled to pupil premium funding benefit from high quality support that promotes their outstanding achievement. Pupils have their individual needs identified at an early stage and, for example, receive extra adult guidance and are fully included in school clubs. As a result, they learn confidently and, as their classmates, make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils build well on their love of books and on the very good phonic understanding established in the early years classes to continue excellent progress in reading as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 avidly enjoyed their 'Everybody Reading in Class' time. Most pupils demonstrated reading skills in advance of those normally expected for their age. Pupils also benefit from the strong links between teachers and parents, which help them to continue children's enjoyment and success in reading at home.

### The early years provision

### is outstanding

- Leadership and management of the early years are excellent. All adults work very effectively as a strong team, ensuring that children understand the routines and rules to keep them safe. Children in the Nursery and in the Reception classes are looked after extremely well. Consequently, children feel valued, rapidly develop self-confidence and their behaviour is outstanding.
- Children join the Nursery with skills that are mostly typical for their age. Their levels of development vary from year to year and, at times, considerably, with language and communication skills often weaker than other areas of learning.
- Teaching is outstanding. As a result, children make excellent progress and achieve extremely well. The skills of children who move from the Nursery into Reception classes (about one third of all the children in the Nursery) at least match and often exceed those typical for their age. They reflect significant progress, especially in children's self-confidence and communication skills.
- Children sustain excellent progress in Reception classes. As a result, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception year is higher than the national average. This is equally the case this year following an increased and successful emphasis on enriching boys' learning. All children enjoy stimulating practical activities, and topics such as 'Magical Me' interest the children and encourage them to share ideas with each other and with their parents.
- The increasing number of children who speak English as an additional language now entering the school are also supported extremely well by individual and specialist support. As a result, all groups of children make exceptional progress.
- Leaders and staff across all early years classes meet and work very well together as teams. They use detailed checks of children's skills to make sure that the work and activities they plan and organise for the children fully address their individual needs. They also ensure that stimulating learning experiences develop well across all the required areas of learning.
- Teachers' planning is detailed and places clear focus for activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes benefit from excellent outdoor learning opportunities that include, for example, enriching gardening and outdoor learning experiences.
- Children are highly curious and extremely well motivated to learn because of the wide variety of activities planned for them. For example, children in Reception were delighted to locate and talk about snails that suddenly emerged after rain.
- Adults are swift and very effective in supporting children during their self-chosen activities. They question the children carefully to extend their thinking, speaking and listening skills to develop their vocabulary.

- Children experience a wealth of opportunities and make excellent progress in developing their writing and mathematical skills during whole class learning and when choosing activities for themselves.
- Teachers take every opportunity to extend their vocabulary and number skills successfully. For example, children talked knowledgeably about days of the week and months of the year and about the weather. Children also showed good number skills by counting those present and those ordering a school meal.
- All staff check the children's developing skills extremely carefully and identify the relevant next steps children need to make to learn successfully. Every child in the Nursery and Reception has their own 'My Learning Journey', which contains detailed evaluations of their levels of skill and progress. These also include valued and helpful contributions from the children and from their parents. They show that children are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113086
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	449552

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	310
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vanessa Newcombe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Mackay
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17–18 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392258894
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