

Inspection of Stafford Junior School

Ringwood Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN22 8UA

Inspection dates: 28–29 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils like coming to school and they want to do well. However, all too often they are not able to do well because they are not given the opportunity to learn. This is because staff's expectations about what they can achieve and of pupils' behaviour are not high enough. As a result, pupils are significantly underachieving.

Pupils' learning is often disrupted by boisterous and, at times, unruly behaviour. Adults are not clear and consistent in how they expect pupils to behave and this can be unsettling for all. While some pupils feel confident to express their ideas in the classroom, others are less sure because they worry about what others might say.

Although pupils are not overly concerned about bullying, they do worry that a small minority of pupils can be aggressive. However, pupils feel that they do have a trusted adult they can talk to. The Year 6 play leaders are also on hand to help pupils play together during lunchtime.

Leaders provide many opportunities for physical activity. Pupils are keen to take part in the exercise sessions both before and after school. Staff carefully check that they offer a variety of sports that all pupils can take part in.

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

Frequent changes in leadership have led to this school failing. Over time, successive leaders have tried a number of strategies to improve pupils' education but have not implemented these fully. As a result, some teachers are confused about leaders' expectations, while others choose not to follow them. Leaders and those responsible for governance have not challenged staff about this and therefore Stafford Junior School is not providing an acceptable and equal standard of education for all.

The curriculum is not well thought out. This means that pupils are not able to build their knowledge and skills. While there has been a recent focus on improving mathematics and writing, improvements are not yet consistently in place across the school. Because of this, many pupils do not achieve as well as they should and too few pupils leave well prepared for secondary school. This year, there is rightly a strong focus on ensuring that pupils who have fallen behind catch up quickly. However, this is likely to be too late to help the oldest pupils achieve national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Leaders have not ensured a consistent approach to teaching pupils to read. Some pupils do enjoy reading and read often. However, many books on offer are poorly matched to pupils' reading levels. This hinders their progress. Staff do not accurately identify pupils who fall behind with their reading nor take action to ensure they catch up quickly. Too many staff lack the skills and training needed to teach reading well.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is weak. Staff do not fully understand the needs of these pupils and therefore do not support them well. As a result, their achievement suffers. A small minority of pupils are excluded from their own classrooms. This means they miss vital opportunities to work with their peers and to learn about the different subjects in the curriculum. However, a further small group of pupils do benefit from the time they spend in 'Starlands'. This nurture provision and the support from staff meet their social and emotional needs well.

Behaviour is inadequate. Frequent off-task behaviour in class disturbs the learning of the majority of pupils. When this is unchallenged by staff, it can become wilful disrespect. A small number of pupils exhibit very challenging behaviour, which the school does not have adequate strategies to manage. As a result, these pupils are not always welcome in classrooms and their needs are not being met. The use of fixed-term exclusions is not helping to improve behaviour over time.

Provision to support pupils' personal development is inconsistent. Some pupils say that they have some opportunities to talk about the world around them and to consider their place within it, but they would like more. Other pupils are not always included in presentations in assemblies and enriching discussions in classrooms. Therefore, not all pupils are prepared well enough for life in modern Britain.

Parents are concerned about how much change the school has gone through. East Sussex local authority and the governing body have tried to manage the disrupting effects. Most recently, they have asked leaders from other schools in the local area to support the school. However, these changes have yet to make any significant impact.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put in place appropriate processes to keep pupils safe. Staff are well trained and can confidently identify any concerns. These are reported and acted upon quickly. Leaders and staff have worked hard to develop strong links with pupils and their families who are most in need. This ensures that they get help from external agencies when required.

Pupils are confident to explain how to keep themselves safe, particularly when they are online. They say this is talked about in their lessons and during assemblies. They feel confident to talk to their teacher if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Through the many changes in leadership, leaders and governors acknowledge that the pace of improvement has not been fast enough. There is a lack of clarity about the education of the pupils, with no shared vision followed by all.

Governors should ensure that they take robust action to challenge leaders to improve all aspects of the school rapidly.

- Recent changes to improve the coherence and sequencing of the curriculum are not established. Further improvements in planning and training are required to ensure the curriculum is implemented effectively. This will help pupils to learn and remember more so they catch up quickly.
- Many pupils do not have the knowledge and skills to be successful at secondary school. This is because they have not met the expected standard by the end of key stage 2. While leaders have prioritised improving the teaching of mathematics and writing, further actions are required so that pupils learn well over time and that their achievement improves.
- The curriculum is not being successfully adapted for pupils with SEND. Teachers have low expectations of pupils with SEND and their needs are not accurately identified and met. Because of this, they are not receiving their full curriculum entitlement or achieving well. Leaders must ensure that staff are well trained to guarantee that the provision in place meets the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is poor and disrupts learning. Some pupils spend too much time out of their classrooms. Leaders should urgently ensure that staff are supported to understand and manage pupils' behaviour, in line with the new behaviour policy. This will reduce the number of behavioural incidents and the disruption to learning.
- The school should not appoint any newly qualified teachers.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	114469
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10122228
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Sage
Headteacher	John Maxwell (Acting executive headteacher)
Website	http://www.roselands-stafford.org
Date of previous inspection	22 – 23 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Following a number of changes in leadership since the last inspection, the acting executive headteacher took over the leadership of the school in an interim capacity in January 2019.
- A new chair of governors joined the governing body in September 2019.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- We met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body, including the chair.
- A meeting also took place with a representative from the local authority.
- An inspector met with the newly qualified teacher to evaluate their induction into the school and the support given.
- We considered the 16 responses to the confidential staff survey. We talked to parents before school and took account of the 72 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, we viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding leader, spoke with pupils and staff, checked school records of safeguarding carried out of adults working at the school, considered a local authority evaluation and spoke with governors.
- We did deep dives in reading, writing, mathematics, history and physical education. We discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

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