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Mr Gareth Simons  
Headteacher  
Stoke Park Primary School  
Romney Avenue  
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Dear Mr Simons

### **Short inspection of Stoke Park Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 29 March 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in January 2013.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your staff's vision accurately reflects the school's aim to be 'a learning adventure' for your pupils where they can 'discover, learn and become'. The strength of the school hinges on the very well-balanced education you provide for your pupils. Not only do they develop their academic skills well but the broad range of extra activities on offer enables them to grow in confidence and self-esteem. For example, daily exercise such as ballet, gymnastics and other physical activities enables pupils to have more opportunities to excel and be rewarded for their talent. This is clearly reflected in the school's success in external examinations and local performances and competitions. This is achieved with aplomb because you and your staff work together extremely well as a team to ensure that pupils have the best possible outcomes. The views of nearly all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, can be summed up by one who explained that 'the staff and senior leadership team at Stoke Park are clearly passionate and committed'.

At the time of the previous inspection, it was acknowledged that pupils presented their work well in English, mathematics and science but did not always take the same care in other subjects. You have tackled this through innovative changes to the curriculum. By extending the school day, you have not only secured more time to teach the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, and with increased

regularity, you have also ensured that there are more opportunities available for pupils to focus and deepen their learning across the wider curriculum. As one parent explained, 'The opportunities and extra activities this school provides are truly amazing.'

The previous inspection report also indicated that pupils needed more opportunities to respond to the oral and written feedback provided by their teacher. Pupils' books show that all teachers consistently follow the school's agreed marking policy. Pupils fully understand this and appropriately respond to the feedback they are given.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils demonstrate a very impressive knowledge of keeping safe. They have a very secure understanding of the different types of abuse and are confident about speaking to an adult in school if they feel unsafe. They know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and are knowledgeable about the dangers of social media.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff and governors have completed the relevant training and apply all aspects of this to their everyday work in school. Recruiting and vetting procedures are very thorough and systematically maintained. Staff know their pupils and their families very well and look out vigilantly for any potential safeguarding concerns. Patterns of pupils' attendance are monitored carefully and the school's mini-buses are used to support those families who find punctuality a challenge. The close links with the local children's centre enables the school to quickly access specialist support when it is required.

Most parents who completed Parent View reported that their children feel safe in school and are well looked after. Their views were summed up by one parent who explained that every member of staff from 'the headteacher to the office staff care about you and your children'.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry was to explore the progress that the Reception children are making, given that their outcomes are below national averages. The vast majority of children start school with extremely underdeveloped personal, social and emotional development. They have limited speaking and listening skills and need to gain confidence with their self-care requirements such as going to the toilet and dressing. In the past, Nursery and Reception classes worked closely together. However, since the school commissioned its Nursery provision to a private provider at the start of this academic year, the Reception class provision has aligned itself closely to Year 1. This has raised expectations for teaching staff, children and their parents because they are now preparing the children better to meet the needs of the Year 1 curriculum.

- There is a greater focus on teaching phonics and ensuring that all children read daily both at home and at school. During the first 15 minutes of the school day, parents of Reception children are encouraged to share in their children's learning. Teaching staff model positive attitudes towards the acquisition of key skills and suggest ways that they can help their children at home. This is enhanced through well-attended workshops and parenting sessions at the adjoining children's centre. Consequently, teaching staff in Reception have developed very close relationships with their parents. You are ensuring that this is effectively maximised by moving the Reception teacher up to Year 1 with the class to maintain a consistent and rigorous approach.
- My next line of enquiry was to explore what the school is doing to improve the proportions of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. The additional time added to the school day has enabled your teaching staff to have quality opportunities to teach phonics systematically and regularly. Effective organisation into ability groups for teaching phonics to Years 1 and 2 is also supporting those Year 2 pupils who need to retake the screening check. Close checking and tracking of the progress that individual pupils make ensure that teaching is tailored to meet their needs. The highest-quality teaching is targeted to those pupils who need the most help. Most current Year 1 pupils are using their phonics knowledge at the expected level, and tracking information reflects a strong improvement on last year's outcomes.
- My final line of enquiry was to check what the school is doing to improve the outcomes of the lower-attaining pupils. The published information in 2016 highlighted that the most able and middle-attaining pupils in Year 2 achieved outcomes that were close to or above national figures. However, lower-attaining Year 2 pupils' outcomes were below national figures. You and your teaching staff analyse pupils' progress rigorously and target individuals who need extra support. The activities planned for them is carefully tailored to meet their needs. The in-depth monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning undertaken by your senior and middle leaders ensures that teaching staff have the highest expectations.
- Professional development experiences and opportunities to visit other schools are used well to promote strong effective teaching. Current Year 2 work and tracking information shows that the lower-attaining pupils are making better progress and the gap between them and their peers is progressively diminishing.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- they embed the systems that have been put in place during this academic year so that Reception children transfer seamlessly into Year 1
- the new emphasis on providing quality support for the lower-attaining pupils in key stage 1 is consistently maintained to ensure that these pupils are well prepared for key stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bristol. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Brackstone  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and we talked about the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. I also considered your self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I looked at all safeguarding records and explored your recruitment and vetting procedures. I held a discussion with five senior and middle leaders. I also met with three members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with another governor. Together we visited all the classes and looked at a sample of books from each year group. I had a discussion with eight Year 6 pupils. I looked at an analysis of 108 paper responses to the questions on the online pupil questionnaire. I considered the 19 responses submitted by parents through Parent View, including nine text comments. I also considered 25 responses from the online staff questionnaire.