

Inspection of Steeple Claydon School and Pre-School

Meadoway, Steeple Claydon, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire MK18 2PA

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be a member of Steeple Claydon School. They relish the challenges of the curriculum and work hard. Children and pupils are eager to talk about their learning and they want to do well.

Staff are kind and caring. They take care of pupils with warmth and sensitivity. This means a lot to pupils. Pupils feel valued and supported by the staff in school. They feel that staff 'look out' for them.

Pupils are polite, friendly and get along well. Specially trained peer mentors offer a friendly ear for children and pupils during breaktimes. Peer mentors are knowledgeable about what to do to help children who are feeling upset or worried. Because of their thorough training, they know when to involve an adult when supporting a child. With this help pupils quickly resolve any friendship issues. Any unkind behaviour is nipped in the bud. As a result, bullying is extremely rare.

The school values of generosity, trust, determination, positivity, respect, confidence and compassion are important to pupils. Pupils develop a clear understanding of what these values mean and how they can show them in their daily lives.

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

The school's vision, 'giving every child the chance to shine', underpins the work of all staff. Leaders have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have built a team of committed staff. Governors share their vision. Together, leaders and governors are determined to deliver the best possible education for all pupils.

Leaders think critically about their work. They are continually looking for ways to improve. They actively seek help and advice from the local authority and other outside agencies to support them in their work.

Teaching pupils to read is a priority. Leaders have adopted a well-structured phonics programme. There is a consistent, effective approach to teaching phonics because staff have been trained well. This means that the teaching of reading is strong. Younger children enjoy their phonics lessons. Older pupils become confident readers who enjoy reading.

Leaders have worked hard to design an ambitious curriculum that enables all pupils to succeed. In most subjects, leaders have considered in detail the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. Teachers know what to teach and when. This helps pupils to build on their prior learning. However, there is still more work to do to ensure that all subjects are thought through to the same high standard. In history, geography and art and design, the order in which pupils will learn the curriculum content is not clear enough. In these subjects, pupils are not

achieving as well as they could be. Leaders are in the process of addressing this and have already made a good start.

Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They explain important concepts clearly. They show pupils how to be successful in their learning. Teachers plan interesting activities for children and pupils to practise important knowledge and skills. For example, 'maths meetings' allow pupils to revise what they have learned so that concepts stay fresh in their minds. Carefully planned additional resources and targeted extra help ensure that pupils with SEND are supported well.

Staff know children and pupils really well. They carefully check what pupils have remembered of the curriculum. Teachers make sure that children and pupils get all the help they need to catch up if they fall behind. This includes in early years where learning is carefully planned and children are well prepared for their move to Year 1 when it comes.

Pupils behave well during lessons. They are enthusiastic, listen carefully and concentrate on their tasks well. Pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well across most of the curriculum.

Diversity and difference are celebrated and promoted in this school. Staff take every opportunity to challenge stereotypes. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions through the formal curriculum and special assemblies. Pupils are respectful of those from different backgrounds. They discuss ethical and moral issues. They enjoy opportunities to think philosophically by considering 'big questions'.

Leaders ensure that the wider curriculum helps pupils to develop important characteristics. For example, the school's performing arts programme helps pupils to develop confidence and resilience. These workshops are particularly popular with pupils. They are keen to apply what they have learned in these sessions when tackling challenges in their learning in other subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping children safe is the number one priority in this school. Leaders train staff thoroughly. Leaders have regular discussions and updates with staff about this crucial element of their work so that it stays on everyone's radar at all times. Staff are vigilant and report any concerns that they have. Leaders work well with outside agencies to make sure that pupils get the help they need.

Staff plan different activities to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe. Pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of consent and healthy relationships. They are very knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not considered in sufficient detail the crucial knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. Leaders need to plan the order in which pupils will learn key knowledge in these subjects so that pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. Because of this, the transition statements have been applied in this inspection.

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.

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.

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	110248
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10212242
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachael Johns
Headteacher	Christine Richards
Website	www.steepleclaydonschool.com
Date of previous inspection	11 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school admits two-year-old children into the nursery provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- An external provider offers before and after school childcare on the school premises.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority and the school's side by side champion.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art and design, computing, reading and mathematics. For each deep dive inspectors met with subject

leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To inspect the school's safeguarding arrangements inspectors met with leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at relevant documentation, staff recruitment checks and training records. The inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met pupils from different year groups to talk about their learning and experiences at school.
- The views of staff, parents and pupils were gathered through discussions and Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Leah Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Ashcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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