

# Inspection of a good school: Ottery St Mary Primary School

Longdogs Lane, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1HY

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Inspection dates:

8 and 9 February 2023

## **Outcome**

Ottery St Mary Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils, parents and staff describe the school as welcoming and vibrant. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that staff care for them. This helps pupils to feel safe. Pupils say there are many trusted adults they can share any worries with. They understand what it means to show respect to others. Consequently, relationships throughout the school are harmonious.

Leaders know pupils' needs very well. They encourage all pupils to follow their dreams. Leaders place no limit on what pupils can achieve. They ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. Pupils show resilience and determination to meet leaders' high expectations.

Parents have positive views of the school. They value the individual care and attention their children receive. Parents speak highly of the vast range of extra-curricular opportunities leaders provide. Pupils take part in many sports, music and charitable events in the local community. Through these opportunities, pupils grow in confidence and learn the value of helping others. Pupils represent the school with pride and learn how to be part of a successful team. They have a can-do attitude, both in and out of the classroom.

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

Leaders have set out the most important knowledge for pupils to know and remember in each subject. They have refined the curriculum following the identification of gaps in pupils' knowledge following COVID-19. Curriculum leaders evaluate the quality of education in their subjects with accuracy. Teachers break learning down into small steps. This helps pupils to deepen their understanding of key concepts. Leaders have started to think about how to further improve assessment. This is because, in some subjects, teachers do not use assessment to fully understand what pupils know and can do. Therefore, teachers are unable to adapt learning based on pupils' prior knowledge. Some

pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. This makes it hard for them to remember their learning over time.

Leaders prioritise reading. Children begin to recognise sounds as soon as they join the early years. Leaders provide ongoing training that helps staff to deepen their knowledge of the school's approach to phonics. Staff skilfully identify pupils who struggle to read. Pupils receive the support they need to catch up quickly. Teachers regularly read to pupils. Books are carefully chosen to broaden pupils' appreciation of different genres. Pupils read books that are closely matched to their reading ability. This strengthens their enjoyment of reading as they develop into fluent and confident readers.

Children get off to a flying start in the early years. They know the school routines and how teachers expect them to behave. Pupils build a strong understanding of number. This prepares them well for future learning in mathematics. Staff ask questions during learning that help children build on what they already know.

Pupils with SEND receive the support they need to learn well. Leaders make regular checks on the progress pupils make towards their targets. They help teachers to adapt learning so that all pupils learn the same ambitious curriculum. Leaders consider carefully how pupils with SEND will develop independence and confidence. This prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.

Pupils relish taking on leadership responsibilities. Their roles, such as sports leaders, house captains and librarians, give them a voice and help them to feel valued. Pupils describe how these roles make a positive difference to the school. Leaders provide an impressive range of enrichment activities. They make thoughtful adaptations to ensure all pupils can access the array of opportunities on offer.

Pupils know how the school rules 'respect, care, listen' help them to behave well. They take responsibility for their actions and consider how they impact others. Learning is rarely disturbed by poor behaviour. Pupils receive the support they need to understand their emotions and cooperate well with others.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They praise leaders for considering their well-being when making decisions about improving the school. Staff feel that leaders value the knowledge and skills they bring to their roles. Leaders carefully plan staff training and deliver it with consideration for staff workload.

Leaders at all levels, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school as well as the areas for further development. They show determination to secure the best outcomes for each pupil. Governors ask the right questions to check this is happening. Parents appreciate the time leaders take to resolve any issues and how they communicate the outcomes with them.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders promote a strong culture of safeguarding. Regular safeguarding training gives staff the depth of understanding they need to remain vigilant. Staff identify, record and report concerns in a timely manner. Leaders leave no stone unturned when taking action to support vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils learn how to keep safe through the curriculum and the assembly programme. Leaders use specialists to teach pupils about aspects of safety such as water safety, keeping safe online and consent.

Leaders focus on safeguarding during recruitment of new staff. They check that all adults in school are suitable to work with children.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment effectively to understand what pupils know and can do. Some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. This makes it hard for them to remember their learning over time. Leaders need to ensure that teachers use assessment to precisely identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and adapt further learning. This will help pupils to know and remember more.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

## **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.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 113105   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Devon  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10241595   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Foundation   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 424  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Craig Allen  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mark Gilronan  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.otteryprimary.co.uk">www.otteryprimary.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 14 and 15 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005       |

## Information about this school

- Ottery St Mary Primary School is larger than the average primary school.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector listened to pupils read.

- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and the safeguarding team. The inspector also spoke with staff, governors and pupils, and evaluated record-keeping and staff training.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, and comments made by parents online during the inspection. They also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Jane Dennis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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