

# Stoney Middleton CofE (C) Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 112858              |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Derbyshire          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 378584              |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 22–23 February 2012 |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | Jeremy Spencer HMI  |

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

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|--|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary controlled                                      |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 15  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Christopher Benson  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Jacqueline Menzies-Conacher                               |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 18 January 2011   |
| <b>School address</b>                      | High Street<br>Stoney Middleton<br>Hope Valley<br>S32 4TL |
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| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01433 639018  |
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|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 4–11                |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 22–23 February 2012 |
| <b>Inspection number</b>  | 378584              |



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Jeremy Spencer

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in six lessons and one act of collective worship, taught by two teachers. This accounted for four hours of inspection time. The inspector observed the school's work, including pupils' books; and looked at a variety of documents, including the school's improvement plan, school policies, attendance data, minutes of the governing body's meetings, staff and governing body training records, assessment data and planning documentation. Meetings were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, pupils, parents and carers, and a representative from the local authority. Responses were also considered on 15 questionnaires returned from parents and carers, seven from staff and 14 from pupils. The inspector also took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.

## Information about the school

This school is much smaller than most primary schools. Pupils are taught in two classes, a combined Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 class and a separate Key Stage 2 class. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average and pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly in line with average.

At the time of the previous inspection the school was given a notice to improve. The headteacher and the Key Stage 2 teacher have since left the school. A new part-time executive headteacher, who also works in a partner school, and a new full-time assistant headteacher, who also teaches the Key Stage 2 class, were appointed in June 2011. The school has achieved the Activemark award and Eco-Schools status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Achievement of pupils</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Quality of teaching</b>            | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>      | <b>2</b> |

## Key findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- This is a good and improving school. Rapid progress has been made since the last inspection. The executive headteacher, ably supported by the assistant headteacher, has tackled the school’s weaknesses with determination and rigour. Many improvements have been made in a short space of time. The school is not outstanding because the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement are not outstanding.
- All groups of pupils make good progress. Attainment in mathematics is lower than in reading and writing, as pupils have more ground to make up from their previous underachievement. The school’s calculation policy is adequate and ensures consistency between the classes in teaching calculation. This supports the good progress pupils are making. A good selection of reading books is available for pupils in Key Stage 2, but they are not always matched accurately to the abilities of higher-attaining pupils.
- The quality of teaching is good and has improved significantly. As a result, pupils make good progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, ensure that work is pitched at just the right level for each individual and ensure good pace in learning activities.
- Relationships between pupils in this very small school are warm and caring and the behaviour and safety of pupils is good. Pupils are given opportunities to learn and socialize with others in a partner school on a weekly basis. However, the school does not make the best use of information and communication technology to maximise opportunities for pupils to learn with and about different groups of pupils in other schools.

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- The quality of leadership and management is good. However, some systems to track pupils' progress lack refinement. Although there have been some opportunities for teachers to observe each other, in the capacity of subject leader, these have been infrequent.

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

- Improve teaching, raise attainment and accelerate progress by:
  - continuing to embed and refine the school's calculation policy
  - matching reading books better to pupils' abilities in Key Stage 2
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to communicate and learn with different groups of pupils in other settings by using information and communication technology more creatively.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - assessing pupils' progress over time more accurately by using finer grades of measure
  - ensuring that teachers, in their capacity as subject leader, observe colleagues' teaching more often, to enable them to monitor quality and support improvement better.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

All parents and carers of pupils at the school believe that their children make good progress. One parent commented, 'I am very pleased with the rapid progress my child is making. His books show fantastic progress since last Easter'. Other parents and carers made similar comments. Inspection evidence confirms that all groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and enjoy learning. Children get off a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress. Spaces in the school are used creatively by staff to ensure that learning environments are stimulating, safe and appropriate for younger children. Here and in Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers know pupils very well and adapt learning activities to meet their individual needs. Attainment across the school in reading and writing is above average, but is broadly average in mathematics. Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about their books. They are taught phonics (letters and sounds) through a structured programme and are able to use a range of strategies in order to understand text. Older pupils sometimes choose books that are either too challenging or not challenging enough and this slows their progress. This is because the school does not band reading books accurately enough to provide guidance when pupils reach 'free-reader' status.

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Pupils make good progress in writing because they are given frequent opportunities to write at length, including writing in different areas of the curriculum. In a writing lesson observed during the inspection, pupils worked independently for a sustained period of time, taking great pride in the quality of their work as they punctuated sentences to include speech marks. All pupils made very good progress in the lesson because the teacher assessed their work continually and with great skill, ensuring that each child understood exactly what they needed to do to improve their work. Pupils are now making better progress in mathematics because they are more confident in using and applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. For example, in a good mathematics lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils enjoyed solving problems involving units of standard and non-standard measure, by using weighing scales.

**Quality of teaching**

All parents and carers believe that their children are taught well at the school. One parent commented, 'The teaching staff have given my child a fantastic start to her education'. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire and who spoke to the inspector during the inspection said that they think teaching at the school is good. Inspection evidence confirms that the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and this is why pupils are making much stronger progress. Pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are engaged and enthusiastic learners. They know and understand their improvement targets well and are able to articulate with great clarity how their learning is developing.

Teachers ensure that learning activities are pitched at just the right level for pupils. This is not easy because of the broad range of ages and abilities in each class. Learning objectives and success criteria are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and this ensures that pupils understand the teachers' expectations. Teachers ensure that lessons run at a good pace to sustain pupils' interest. Lesson introductions are frequently interspersed with sharp and focused peer discussion opportunities, which ensure that pupils are active rather than passive learners. At the end of lessons, pupils evaluate their work, learning and progress, and that of their peers, with careful thought and interest, demonstrating good engagement in learning. Teachers mark pupils work skilfully, identifying misconceptions and applying the school's revised marking policy consistently, to highlight the next steps of learning. Infrequent lesson observations and feedback from subject leaders mean that opportunities for teachers to improve their subject knowledge are limited.

The school's calculation policy is successfully helping to drive improvement in mathematics teaching and is generating good consistency in teachers' approaches to calculation. However, the school acknowledges that the policy could be further refined to offer greater challenge and raise teachers' expectations for more-able pupils.

Teachers ensure that learning activities promote pupils' spiritual, social, moral and

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cultural development well. Pupils' spiritual development is particularly strong, as teachers facilitate frequent moments of calm to enable them to reflect on their experiences, both within lessons and in acts of collective worship.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. The inspector found that behaviour is good in lessons and around the building. In some lessons, outstanding behaviour was observed. Teachers and teaching assistants manage their interactions with pupils in very small class sizes skilfully, ensuring that focused working relationships with pupils are maintained. It is clear that there has been a concerted effort to improve behaviour since the previous inspection and this has been successful.

Almost all pupils say they feel safe in school and that others behave well; most parents and carers agree, indicating that behaviour is good over time. School records and interviews with pupils show that there have been very few incidents of bullying and that they are dealt with effectively, following school policy. Pupils are considerate of each others' needs and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Older pupils model good and caring behaviour and younger pupils aspire to be like their older peers. For example, during a lesson observed in the inspection, younger pupils struggled to tie their aprons before a painting lesson. Older pupils helped them without being prompted. Later in the lesson, a younger pupil was overheard saying to an older pupil, 'Wow, your work is amazing. I want mine to be like that'. These attitudes are supporting pupils' good achievement. The pupils' enjoyment of learning is also reflected in attendance, which is above average and improving for almost all pupils.

### **Leadership and management**

The executive headteacher communicates high expectations and focuses tirelessly on securing improvements. Working in close partnership with the assistant headteacher, she has successfully established a positive climate for learning and has the full support of parents, carers and staff. Staff have become re-energised, ambitious and determined to improve. The leader responsible for managing the Early Years Foundation Stage and, separately, the leader responsible for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, carry out their duties effectively.

The governing body is supportive of the work of the school and knows what needs to be done to bring about further improvement. Its monitoring of the school's work has become more rigorous, for example, through increased visits to the school to observe its work and discuss pupils' learning in lessons with school leaders. As a result, it has been better prepared to challenge the school and hold staff to account for the rates of progress made by pupils. The school tracks the progress of each pupil carefully, but leaders understand that the use of finer grades of measure will improve accuracy further. The local authority has supported the school very well since the last inspection and has ensured that professional development opportunities for staff have been frequent and effectively targeted. This has

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contributed to a rapid improvement in the standard of teaching. Teachers, in their capacity of subject leader, do not observe and monitor the quality of their colleagues' teaching frequently enough.

The curriculum has been revised by the school and meets pupils' needs well because it is good, varied and stimulating. 'Creativity' themes have been planned carefully by staff to link different subjects together. This means that opportunities for pupils to take part in extended writing activities and to use and apply their mathematical skills are now more frequent across the curriculum. This is contributing to pupils' rising attainment. The curriculum promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils travel to work, learn and play with peers in a partner school on a weekly basis. This promotes the development of their social skills well. However, the school acknowledges that more creative use could be made of information and communication technology, particularly through video-conferencing, to provide more frequent opportunities for pupils in this small rural community to work and learn with different groups of children, in a range of settings.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are securely in place and rigorously applied. School leaders promote equality of opportunity effectively and are well prepared to tackle any discrimination. The rapid improvements secured in the quality of teaching that have led to rising achievement, and improvements in pupils' behaviour indicate the school's good capacity to improve.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.  |
| Grade 2 | Good         | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.  |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.  |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

### Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 46  | 46   | 8            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 8   | 47   | 40           | 5          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 38   | 40           | 8          |
| Special schools      | 28  | 48   | 20           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 15  | 50   | 29           | 5          |
| All schools          | 11  | 46   | 38           | 6          |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.   |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.  |
| Attendance:                | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.   |
| Behaviour:                 | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.   |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.                    |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.                            |
| Learning:                  | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.  |
| Overall effectiveness:     | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.  |
| Progress:                  | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety:                    | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.             |

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Stoney Middleton CofE (C) Primary School, Hope Valley, S32 4TL**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school recently and for filling in the questionnaires before the inspection. I would also like to give a special thank you to the pupils who gave up part of their lunchtime to talk to me.

This letter is to tell you what I found out. You go to a good school, which has improved very quickly since the last inspection. You have worked hard and your behaviour has improved. Well done. The quality of teaching has got much better and this means that you are making much better progress. I was very impressed by your discussions about how much you had learned at the end of each lesson and what you could do to improve. Older children take good care of younger ones and your school is a kind and caring place to be in. Your school leaders have done a good job in helping things to improve and they want the school to get even better!

I have asked the school to do some things to improve even more. They are to:

- make sure that 'free-reader' books are labelled more carefully to show you how hard they are, so that you can choose a book at just the right level
- keep developing ideas to help you to learn to calculate numbers better
- try to use computers and video-conferencing to let you speak to and learn with pupils from other schools more often and make new friends
- measure your progress more closely to check how you are doing
- make sure that the teachers watch each other teach more often, so that they can learn new ideas and help each other.

You can help too by continuing to try your best, behave well and enjoy learning! Thank you once again for all of your help. I think that you are very lucky to go to a school in such a pretty location!

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Spencer  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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