

Stoney Middleton CofE (C) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112858
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357209
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Suzanne Sutherland
Headteacher	Christopher Tupling
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2007
School address	High Street Stoney Middleton, Hope Valley S32 4TL
Telephone number	01433 630520
Fax number	01433 639018
Email address	school@stonymiddleton.derbyshire.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector, who observed two teachers in a total of six lessons or parts of lessons. Meetings were held with the school's leaders, members of the governing body and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of policies, planning records, minutes of governing body meetings and data about pupils' performance. She examined documentation associated with the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe. The inspector also scrutinised 14 completed questionnaires returned by parents and carers, seven by pupils and seven by staff.

The inspection reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- how well all groups of pupils, and especially those who are potentially the most-able, achieve in all subjects and particularly in mathematics
- how effectively the members of staff use the range of assessment information to ensure that lessons challenge all groups of pupils to make good progress
- how rigorous senior managers are in monitoring the work of the school, judging the quality of provision and identifying further areas for improvement.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and is based in a rural village in the Peak District area of Derbyshire. Pupils are taught in one of two classes, one for Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and the other for Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. No pupils come from families where English is spoken as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Their additional needs include specific learning difficulties. The school was identified for closure in 2007 but following a campaign by local families, this decision was overturned and a new headteacher was appointed in 2008. The school holds a bronze ECO award.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2 and in the quality of curriculum planning, teaching and learning.

Although there have been improvements over the last year, too many pupils do not make adequate progress and there is significant variation in progress across the key stages. Pupils enjoy their time in school and say they particularly like art and the 'golden time' rewards. The majority of parents and carers think well of the school and speak warmly of how the staff care for their children. This is epitomised by a parent who notes 'all the teachers have been extremely supportive and have looked for different ways to help my child and have taken a genuine interest'. Pupils adopt a healthy lifestyle because the school ensures there is a good focus on healthy eating and physical activity. Attendance is above average. The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory with strengths in the pastoral care of everyone in the school community.

Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is very varied and often slightly above that typical for children of this age. At the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average. Across the school pupils read with a reasonable level of skill and enjoyment. Most make satisfactory overall progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, and the rate of progress here is improving. But in Key Stage 2, progress is inadequate. In the lessons observed and in the sample of recent work, older pupils do not do well enough in mathematics. This is because many do not have strategies to enable them to solve problems and rely on others to tell them how to work things out. Pupils' writing skills are limited by the lack of opportunity to write at length and in depth. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they receive specific and well-targeted support.

The quality of teaching, learning and curriculum planning is inadequate. The planning of lessons in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and takes account of mixed ages and abilities. At Key Stage 2, activities are not challenging enough for many pupils because staff do not make good enough use of assessment information to track the progress individuals or groups make. The planning of lessons is sometimes weak and, in mathematics for example, there is an over-reliance on published materials and too little opportunity to solve open-ended problems. Additionally, pupils do not always know their targets or are aware of how to improve their work.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has an accurate grasp of the quality of teaching and has established a model of peer coaching to

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improve skills across the school. This has met with some success in Key Stage 1. The Chair of the Governing Body has made a good start in extending and developing the systems through which governors monitor the work of the school. Many of these processes are relatively new and have not had time to show an impact on standards. The leadership of literacy, the Early Years Foundation Stage and of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve even though leadership in mathematics is inadequate. A key weakness in all areas is that the formal monitoring of the work of the school by staff and governors has not been rigorous enough to make clear to all concerned exactly what the quality of provision is and where specific improvement is needed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the curriculum to improve progress and raise standards especially at Key Stage 2 by:
 - planning opportunities for pupils to use and apply their calculation skills to solve mathematical problems confidently
 - extending the opportunities across all subjects for pupils to write at length and in depth in different contexts.
- Ensure that the quality of lesson planning, teaching and learning is consistently good or better by:
 - making effective use of assessment information to set work that challenges pupils of different abilities, especially the more-able
 - ensuring that pupils know their targets and recognise what aspects of their work they need to improve.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the headteacher, subject leaders and where appropriate the governing body systematically and rigorously check and improve provision and outcomes in areas for which they hold responsibility.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress. Lesson observations and samples of work show that attainment is improving in this key stage. Pupils enjoy finding things out. For example they enjoyed working on the 'mission' they received from a letter setting them a challenge to identify the similarities and differences between characters in different stories.

Progress in Key Stage 2 is more variable and overall too few pupils make enough progress. Their reasoning skills are poor. For example, when finding the middle number between two decimals, older pupils laboriously wrote out lists of numbers instead of finding a quicker method. While pupils in Year 3 made some progress in writing, such as adding speech marks to different texts, other pupils were unsure of what they had to do next and sat waiting for guidance. The sample of recent work shows few examples illustrating the development of pupils' writing at length and in depth.

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The personal development and well-being of the pupils is satisfactory as is their behaviour. However, some pupils lack initiative and independence, as shown in lesson observations. Occasionally, pupils do not make a lot of effort to answer questions or complete their work carefully which hinders their learning. Pupils feel safe. Most think that there is little bullying although some have minor concerns about the behaviour of a few. School leaders have worked successfully to overcome the limitations of the school site and ensured a good range of resources and lots of support for active play. With good quality meals cooked on site and considerable encouragement to eat healthily, some parents speak with pleasure about how this has led their child to eat well. All pupils have swimming lessons which has a positive impact on their health and well-being. Pupils' contribution to school life and the wider community is satisfactory. Pupils grow in confidence as they move through the school. They are adequately prepared for their next steps in life and learning.. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Through growing links with a school in Kerala and other means, the pupils are developing greater awareness of other cultures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

While the quality of planning, teaching and learning is inadequate, there are some strengths in teachers' use of encouragement and praise. These help pupils grow in confidence and develop their relationships with each other and the adults around them.

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The teaching of the younger pupils is satisfactory and has some good features. Activities are carefully planned for the teacher and assistant to take turns working with the different age groups in the class. Activities often make good use of resources including counting and recording materials and a range of story books that interest the pupils. The level of challenge in activities is satisfactory and through staff coaching there is a growing focus on meeting the needs of the more-able pupils.

In Key Stage 2, the strengths are more limited and staff spend too much time talking to one group while others wait. Explanations of what pupils are to do are sometimes unclear. There is not enough focus on practical tasks or research and some activities lack imagination and do little to motivate pupils to try hard. Planning is weak and not enough use is made of assessment information to set tasks that challenge pupils of different abilities. Checks on pupils' progress are not well managed. Staff recognise that assessment at the end of Year 2 last year was not accurate enough. Insufficient use is made of the information available to track individual rates of progress as pupils move through the school.

The pastoral care of the pupils is a strength of the school and with such small numbers there are effective procedures to support individuals because their characteristics are recognised and considered. Pupils and parents are provided with advice and guidance which is particularly effective for pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff provide well for these pupils and work with external agencies to provide additional support with one parent noting 'I couldn't ask for more'. There are appropriate transition arrangements for pupils entering school and when moving to secondary education. Attendance is well managed and work with external agencies has resulted in improved attendance and a decrease in persistent absence. Academic guidance is generally satisfactory. However, some pupils do not know their targets for improvement well enough. The marking of work is also variable and in some cases not always completed sufficiently to enable the pupils to know what they need to do to improve.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The members of a very small staff team fulfil numerous roles and are successful in providing an attractive learning environment where pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. There have been considerable improvements to the school building and outside areas supported by the governing body and parents. These ensure every inch of the small site is used well. The headteacher has a high teaching commitment and works with all

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ages across the school which gives him a secure knowledge of school performance. He is working with some success to embed ambition and a drive for improvement. However, the pace of improvement is too slow. This is partly because the formal monitoring of teaching and learning are limited and not used well enough to inform school improvement planning. The model of coaching staff in order to focus on specific areas of performance has led to some improvement. Teachers' skills in planning for a wide age and ability range are not sufficiently established through professional development.

The governing body is led well but still developing the effectiveness of several relatively new governors by extending their understanding of curriculum matters. Everyone takes seriously the responsibility to safeguard pupils. Careful checks have been carried out on all who work with pupils. Nevertheless, the recording of information about accidents and other incidents has been minimal.

Links with parents and carers and partnerships with external agencies and other schools are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors are liaising with the Parish Council to strongly urge consideration to make a section of the road directly outside the school gate a much safer place. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory; there are good links with the local community and clear plans to extend the national and global aspects through links with a school in India for example. School leaders ensure the promotion of equality of opportunity in a satisfactory manner but have not always prioritised the needs of the more-able pupils well enough.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

With no pupils in some year groups and up to six in others, children's attainment when they enter the school varies widely. There are satisfactory arrangements for tracking the progress children make. Planning for lessons identifies specific activities for the younger

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ones who work within the mixed-age class with the teacher or teaching assistant. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and, in some activities, it has some good features. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning. Staff praise the children well. Introductions to activities are often enthusiastic and encourage children in wanting to find things out. Most children settle well and become happy and talkative young learners who enjoy doing what their friends and siblings do. They like looking at books and particularly enjoyed using the salt dough and dry pasta quills to make hedgehogs. They enjoy using the home corner and sand and water trays, and playing outdoors with a range of games equipment; all of these activities have a positive impact on the development of social and communication skills. Sometimes, the children make too little progress where tasks are not matched well to their age and ability. For example, when they are expected to discuss 'tricksy' characters in stories, or role-play these characters without the use of props or costumes. Leadership and management are satisfactory and, with recently improved assessment routines, provision is set to improve further.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A good proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Most are particularly pleased with the quality of care provided for their children with one noting the 'support to both my child and our family has been invaluable'. All parents feel that their children are kept safe, helped to develop a healthy lifestyle and that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. While there was some strong disagreement noted in the response to the inspection questionnaire it must be noted that these views came from a very small number of respondents and did not represent the majority view. The inspector considered all the comments made and noted that the school takes seriously any complaints made. The inspector judged that the quality of information to parents is satisfactory as is the way in which the school helps parents and carers support their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stoney Middleton CoFE (C) Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspector received 14 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 17 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	71	2	14	2	14	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	71	4	29	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	8	57	3	21	0	0	3	21
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	57	2	14	2	14	1	7
The teaching is good at this school	8	57	3	21	1	7	2	14
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	57	3	21	0	0	3	21
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	64	5	36	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	6	43	5	36	0	0	3	21
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	57	4	29	1	7	1	7
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	57	6	43	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	50	4	29	0	0	3	21
The school is led and managed effectively	8	57	3	21	0	0	3	21
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	57	3	21	0	0	3	21

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



20 January 2011

Dear Pupils

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

Thank you very much for making me welcome when I visited the school recently. I valued meeting you, including the group that I talked to who were particularly good at explaining what you all do. I liked meeting you in lessons and when I attended assembly. I particularly enjoyed chatting to you at lunchtimes and seeing you play outside so well together. I also liked watching the younger ones play a game where they passed a large spider around while they counted on the next numbers. Thank you also for the questionnaires that you filled in for the inspection.

Your school does some things well but it needs significant improvement so that you can all make better progress in your learning. There have been improvements over the last year, but more could still be done. The youngest children make a satisfactory start to school. You are all known very well as individuals and kept safe. I was pleased to see how well you develop healthy lifestyles and noted how keen you all were to go swimming and that your attendance is good. Some teaching is satisfactory but there are also some shortcomings in it. The headteacher, governing body and staff have agreed to work on some important things to improve the school. These are particularly to:

- improve the quality of lesson planning to provide you with a more interesting range of activities so that you make more progress in mathematics and writing
- improve teaching and learning and the use of targets so that work is just a bit harder for most of you
- check more carefully how well things are working so that everyone knows what else needs to be improved and how to do this.

You can all help by working hard in lessons and improving the presentation of your writing and work in mathematics. I hope you will all work with the school to make it more effective in helping you learn.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector

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