

Stogumber Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123774
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380726
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Neech HMI

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	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Harbour
Headteacher	Jennifer Yates
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The school is federated with Crowcombe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. Separate inspection teams inspected the two schools simultaneously.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector observed six lessons and two teachers. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher of the federated schools. The inspector held meetings with teachers, a group of pupils, and parents and carers. A joint meeting took place with the Chair and members of the federation governing body, together with the lead inspector of the partner school. A telephone discussion was held with a representative from the local authority. The inspector scrutinised a range of school documentation and looked at 21 questionnaires received from parents and carers, nine from staff and 17 from pupils.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How teaching and assessment promote pupils' learning in English and mathematics so that individuals achieve as well as they can.
- How the curriculum and wider opportunities provided through the federation support pupils' learning.
- How leaders and managers at all levels use assessment information to raise achievement.
- How effectively steps have been taken to improve attendance.

Information about the school

The school is smaller-than-the-average-sized primary school. It has been federated with Crowcombe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School since September 2005. The school shares the federation headteacher and governing body. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most pupils come from White British heritages. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Pupils are taught in two mixed-aged classes. The teaching of Key Stage 2 is shared with the partner school. A school minibus is provided to transport the pupils between schools. A breakfast and after-school club is available for pupils at the partner school.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The nurture and care of pupils and their families are a strong feature of this satisfactory school's work. Parents and carers say that their children are safe and well looked after. One parent summed up the views of many by saying that the school was 'a real gem'. Behaviour is good. Shared expertise across the federation is beginning to improve practice, such as the approaches to assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Improvements in the quality of individual education plans mean that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Parents and carers are appreciative of the range of clubs and extended opportunities offered to their children as a result of the partnership between Stogumber and its partner school. As one parent put it, 'After-school care has been excellent.'

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Since the last inspection attendance has improved and is now above average. School data show that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. However, leaders and managers of the federation have not consistently been successful in raising achievement of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. By the time pupils have reached the end of Key Stage 2, their overall progress is satisfactory. This is because, at times, the pace of lessons is slow and teachers' expectations are not high enough to challenge all pupils. Planning is generally effective, but tasks do not match closely enough to pupils' abilities and so they make less progress. Teachers' marking is inconsistent. Almost half of the pupils who completed the pupil questionnaires indicated that they did not know how well they were doing at school. The performance of the very small cohorts in national tests over the last three years has been variable. Overall, it is broadly average in English and mathematics. Tracking data show signs of improving performance for the current Year 6 and Year 5 pupils.

There are strengths in the satisfactory teaching. Pupils report that teachers make lessons interesting. A particular favourite is history where pupils enjoy being young archaeologists. One pupil talking about the school reported that 'it was just perfect!'

The school has a satisfactory capacity to implement and sustain improvements necessary to the attainment and progress of pupils because of:

- satisfactory self-evaluation
- the actions taken by leaders to implement a more consistent approach to the

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- use of assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage across the federation
- the improvements to planning and assessment for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the good care, guidance and support afforded to pupils
- the improvement in attendance
- the good partnership with parents and carers.

Positive relationships are a feature of the sound teaching. The good support given to individuals with special educational needs and or/disabilities means they join in with all activities, such as leading the popular morning 'wake and shake' sessions. The strengths in the satisfactory curriculum include the enrichment opportunities through the partnership with other schools, for example, in science days. Leaders and managers have plans to address weaknesses in the curriculum content through further sharing expertise across the federation.

The consistent use of assessment information and the setting of challenging targets, which are shared with staff for all pupils, are not yet firmly embedded in all key stages. The governing body is supportive of the school. Governors' evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is satisfactory. They and the federation's leaders recognise the urgent need to develop their strategic role by closely monitoring all aspects of the school's performance, and regularly evaluating the impact of their work on raising the achievement of pupils.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012 further improve the way in which federation leaders and managers, including the governing body, apply their strategic role through:
 - a rigorous programme of monitoring teaching, learning, marking and assessment
 - setting challenging targets, shared with all staff, to ensure all pupils achieve well
 - regularly evaluating the success of actions taken in relation to pupils' progress and their attainment.
- By July 2012 raise the quality of teaching and the use of assessment information from satisfactory to good so that pupils make consistently good progress by:
 - ensuring teachers match tasks more closely to pupils' abilities
 - providing pupils with information on how well they are doing and how to improve their work through setting challenging targets and through marking

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- improving the pace in lessons to ensure all pupils are fully engaged.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The youngest children begin school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly in line with levels typically seen. Within the small cohorts, children's skills vary each year. However, the picture of good progress from children's different starting points through to the end of Reception is now more consistent as a result of improved tracking and assessment. The standards reached by pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 in lessons are broadly average. Consequently, achievement overall is satisfactory.

In English, pupils perform better in reading than in writing. In a Key Stage 2 lesson older pupils talked enthusiastically about the characters in books they have been reading, in preparation for writing a character description. However, the quality of the written work produced in the lesson was limited because targets set did not provide sufficient challenge. The quality of pupils' written work in books in Key Stage 2 over time shows variable standards. In mathematics, more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 quickly add numbers mentally together, but work set does not always challenge them to apply their mathematical skills. In a mathematics lesson limited resources meant that some pupils were not actively engaged. As a result pupils' progress was satisfactory.

Work on phonics is having a positive impact on the standards reached by pupils in reading. Reception children enjoy singing action songs related to letter sounds. More-able children quickly identify letter sounds at the beginning of words.

There are some signs that gaps between the attainment of individuals and national expectations in English and mathematics are beginning to close. School assessments show that pupils in Year 6 are generally on track to achieve or exceed expected standards. Pupils know their targets, but those set in lessons observed during inspection lack the challenge to help pupils improve their work.

Pupils play an active part in the life of the school and the community. Through the work of the federation the two schools have joined together to support events such as local fairs. This supports their satisfactory skills for the future. Pupils have a good understanding of staying healthy through eating a suitable diet and engaging in exercise as recognised by the school's work towards the Healthy Schools Plus Award. Older pupils take seriously the responsibility of guiding younger pupils. During an act of collective worship older pupils helped youngsters to think about the wonders of the world. This led to pupils' own prayers about keeping the world safe and reflections on moral and spiritual issues.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	2

How effective is the provision?

The secure teaching is underpinned by the good relationships. In the older class, lessons are punctuated with humour from adults and this is enjoyed by pupils. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Parents and carers report that staff are always available to talk about their children at the end of the day.

Planning in English and mathematics is mainly matched to the needs of each year group within the mixed-aged classes. For example, in the introductory part of a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 the teacher adapted quick-fire questions to the age and abilities of the pupils. As a result, everyone applied their mathematical skills. However, in the main part of the lesson, less progress was made because tasks were not always sufficiently challenging. Teachers' marking makes a contribution to pupils' learning and at times gives advice on how to improve, but this is not consistent for all pieces of work. Assessment in lessons is often too general to help pupils to improve their work.

The satisfactory curriculum gives pupils opportunities to develop a range of skills, such as in music and information and communication technology. Being part of a federation has enabled the school to provide enrichment opportunities, such as in sport. The school has strong links with Gambia, which contributes to developing pupils' understanding of world economies. Pupils are provided with opportunities to compare agricultural life in Gambia with their own rural community. Visitors from Gambia add value to pupils' understanding of different religions and in this way

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

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pupils reflect on world faiths.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers of the federation are ambitious to ensure that all youngsters have an equal chance to achieve their full potential. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily, for example, through the training given to staff across the federation on meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. School leaders understand that the monitoring of teaching, learning, marking and assessment requires a sharper focus to effect further improvement. Some middle leaders, such as the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, are developing their role across the partnership, by supporting staff in the assessment procedures.

The information the governing body receives through the headteacher's reports is fairly comprehensive. The governing body has a satisfactory view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body is less clear how to put this knowledge into a working strategic plan to raise standards further. Governors have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. Safeguarding arrangements are suitable and meet statutory responsibilities, because staff are clear on procedures. The federation has been successful in promoting community cohesion well locally.

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	3
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

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

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

Parents and carers speak highly of the way in which staff help their children settle into the mixed Reception and Key Stage 1 class. Children make good progress and by the time they reach the end of the Reception Year most have reached the early learning goals.

Children play well together and chatter away happily. More-able youngsters display advanced language skills. Teaching for the reception-aged children is effective and provides a fun way to learn. There is a balance between opportunities for adult-led activities, such as investigating numbers, and those initiated by the children, such as small construction. During the inspection children enjoyed different ways of finding out about the number seven, such as counting a row of puppies sat on a wall and painting number shapes. More advanced children independently sorted toy dinosaurs and insects into two groups and counted the total. Children display good creative skills. One child described her rainbow picture, accurately talking about each colour. Most children are beginning to be independent, such as being able to hang up wet paintings to dry without adult help. However, occasionally, adults do not give children the opportunity to think for themselves, such as directing children to wash their hands in preparation for 'snack time'.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has been instrumental in developing a consistent approach to observation, assessment and planning across the federation. As a result, entry and exit assessments are now accurate and reliable. Parents and carers appreciate the information shared with them on their children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

A higher proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than seen nationally. Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are happy with their children's experiences at school. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about how the school helps their children understand how to live healthy lives. During the inspection the inspector observed a range of activities taking place which promoted pupils' health. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about their children's progress. The inspection found variations in pupils' progress and judged progress overall as satisfactory and an area for improvement. A very few parents and carers commented on the organisation of teaching within the federation. They commented on the lack of opportunity for parents and carers to meet their child's new teacher prior to their children starting in a new class. The school acknowledges that parents and carers could have been given more information and more opportunities to meet teachers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stogumber Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 40 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	71	5	24	0	0	1	5
The school keeps my child safe	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	52	7	33	2	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	81	3	14	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	16	76	4	19	0	0	1	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	71	4	19	2	10	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)	15	71	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	15	71	5	24	0	0	1	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	71	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	71	6	29	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	62	5	24	2	10	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	16	76	4	19	0	0	1	5

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



30 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stogumber Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Taunton TA4 3TQ

Thank you for welcoming me on my recent visit. Your views helped me to make my judgements. This letter is to tell you what I found.

You enjoy school and behave well. You are well looked after in school and feel safe. Your learning and progress are satisfactory. Your school gives you a sound education. Your achievements overall are satisfactory. In addition:

- your attendance is now good
- those of you who find learning more difficult make good progress
- the leader of the work for reception-aged children provides good leadership
- relationships are good
- you enjoy clubs and after-school activities
- teaching, how teachers use assessments of your work and the curriculum are satisfactory
- marking is satisfactory
- your parents and carers say the school is welcoming.

I have asked the leaders and managers of your school to monitor teaching, learning and assessment very carefully. I have also asked your teachers to make sure lessons move along at a good pace, set you challenging targets matched to your ability, tell you how well you are doing and help you to improve your work.

I am confident that you will do all you can by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech
Her Majesty's Inspector

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