

# Inspection of Stoke St Michael Primary School

Moonshill Road, Stoke St Michael, Radstock, Somerset BA3 5LG

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Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Pupils develop strong values at Stoke St Michael School. They are proud advocates of the school's learning 'powers', which help them to make good choices. Pupils have a keen sense of fairness. They value difference. Leaders prioritise pupils' well-being. Pupils trust adults to keep them safe. They say 'everyone is kind' at school.

Leaders are designing an ambitious curriculum. Improvements to reading and mathematics are paying off. However, the curriculum is not clear enough about what pupils need to know in some subjects. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should.

Pupils behave well. Clear routines make the school a calm and harmonious place to learn. Pupils get on well together. They enjoy the range of games available to them at breaktimes. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that adults will resolve any bullying or poor behaviour quickly.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, for example by being sports captains and 'eco-warriors'. Pupils are well prepared to be responsible citizens. They are proud of their fundraising for a new pond area in school, for example. The curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors. Pupils attend a range of clubs to develop their interests, including chess, baking and sports clubs.

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

Leaders have ambitious aims for the curriculum. However, staffing changes and the ongoing impact of COVID-19 have hindered the development of some subjects. Leaders' curriculum thinking is further forward in English and mathematics. The curriculum in the early years is well designed and prepares children for Year 1.

In some subjects, it is not clear what important knowledge pupils need to learn and when. As a result, pupils do not build the depth of knowledge that they should. For example, pupils do not secure knowledge of drawing and painting techniques in art.

Pupils learn well where leaders have designed the curriculum effectively. In mathematics and reading, pupils learn new concepts in a logical order. Teachers help pupils to remember more by revisiting important learning. They use their checks to identify gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils build on what they know and can do. However, assessment is not as well developed in other subjects. Teachers do not always check what pupils know and remember. Consequently, gaps in pupils' knowledge widen over time.

Leaders are passionate about promoting a love of reading. Staff choose books which deepen pupils' vocabulary. Pupils love listening to stories and talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors. Children in the early years learn a wide range of stories, rhymes, and songs. Leaders have established a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Children learn to read and spell from the start of the Reception

Year. Staff make careful checks on pupils' learning. They provide extra help to pupils who do not keep pace with the school's programme. Older pupils deepen their understanding of challenging texts.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take part in the full curriculum alongside their peers. Leaders identify and assess their needs carefully. Pupils with social and emotional needs receive targeted support, including from specialist staff. However, pupils with SEND do not learn the curriculum consistently well. Some teachers do not use assessment precisely enough to pinpoint what pupils with SEND need to learn next.

Pupils are keen to learn. They are eager to share what they know with their friends and adults. Pupils strive to earn rewards as a 'marvellous mathematician' or a 'wonderful writer' in weekly assemblies. Adults expect pupils to behave well, and they do. Disruption to learning is rare. Leaders provide extra help for pupils who need support to manage their behaviour. They work closely with families to improve pupils' attendance.

Pupils learn about people from different backgrounds. They know the importance of tolerance and mutual respect. Pupils understand how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They value the time they have to reflect on their mental health. Pupils talk with well-trained adults if they have a worry. Pupils enjoy the many clubs and trips on offer, including a residential visit to Kilve Court.

Those responsible for governance understand the school's priorities for improvement. However, they do not check on some aspects of leaders' work with enough rigour. Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They do not have a clear understanding of what pupils have learned previously. Leaders recognise that the expertise of some subject leaders needs to be developed.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate leaders' consideration of their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise keeping pupils safe. Staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training. They are alert to risks to pupils' safety and welfare. Staff know how to report concerns. Leaders act promptly to help pupils and families who need it. They work well with external agencies to secure the right help. Staff carry out thorough checks on adults who work with pupils.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. They speak confidently about keeping safe online. Pupils can name trusted adults they can speak to about any concerns they may have.

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

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

- The design of the curriculum in some foundation subjects is not clear about what pupils need to learn and when. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and therefore do not learn as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum identifies the knowledge pupils need to learn and remember as they progress through the school.
- Teachers do not check precisely enough for gaps in pupils' knowledge in some wider curriculum subjects. This prevents pupils, including those with SEND, from building their knowledge securely on what they already know. Pupils struggle to recall their learning in some subjects. Leaders need to establish systems for assessment which help pupils to know and remember more across the whole curriculum.
- Some subject leaders do not know the strengths and areas for improvement in their curriculum areas. This prevents them from improving the curriculum further. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the knowledge to carry out their roles effectively in order to bring about improvements to the curriculum.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123662
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268204
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	57
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nicholas Cramp
<b>Headteacher</b>	Melanie Vincent
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.croscombestokefederation.co.uk">www.croscombestokefederation.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 and 5 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- There have been some leadership changes since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in July 2021.
- Leaders provide nursery education for three- and four-year-old children.
- The school shares a governing body with Croscombe Church of England Primary School.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- Leaders provide breakfast and after-school club provision on site.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders and groups of staff. The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair, and with a representative of Somerset local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum and spoke with pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the start of the first day of the inspection.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors spoke with pupils to gain their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered 18 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 18 free-text responses, and three responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Mirams, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Adam Matthews	Ofsted Inspector

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