



Stoke Goldington Church of England First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110408
LEA Milton Keynes LEA
Inspection number 278425
Inspection dates 16 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector Barbara Atcheson AI

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

Type of school	First	School address	25 High Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Stoke Goldington
Age range of pupils	4 to 8		Newport Pagnell MK16 8NP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01908 551253
Number on roll	27	Fax number	01908 551253
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Gary Twyford
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Susan Judd

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The majority of pupils who come to this very small rural school are from middle income, home-owning families. Almost all are of White British heritage and very few are entitled to free school meals. There are two pupils with statements for their learning disabilities. The school has strong links with its parish church. The present head teacher is retiring in July 2006. As a part of local reorganisation the school will enter into partnership with another first school in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspector agrees with senior management, governors, pupils and parents that this is a good school which gives good value for money. One parent wrote, 'Our children could not ask for a better start to their education'. The school has outstanding strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being and in the high quality care, guidance and support it provides. Provision for pupils with learning disabilities is exceptionally good.

Achievement and standards are good. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from good provision, make good progress and achieve well by the end of their reception year. Standards continue to rise so that by the end of Year 2 attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the past five years standards have risen steadily and a large majority of pupils exceed the levels expected for their age.

Good teaching ensures that all pupils make good progress because they are motivated and learning is made relevant. Teaching is especially effective for the more able and those with learning disabilities. Well focused assessment ensures that the learning needs of all pupils are met. However not all pupils are clear about their next steps in learning because target setting is not sharp enough. Joined handwriting is not sufficiently promoted and this detracts from the quality of pupils' written work.

Effective leadership and management have been successful in creating a committed team who are ambitious for the pupils' success. The school improvement plan sets the correct agenda and as a result there is a good track record of improvement and steadily rising standards demonstrating the school's capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the use of target setting so that all pupils are clear about their next steps in learning.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing through the promotion of joined handwriting.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start school with average standards and make good progress to attain above average standards in all areas of learning by the end of reception. Standards continue to rise as pupils get older so that by the end of Year 2, they are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. School data indicates that as a result of good teaching, all pupils make good progress across all subjects. Standards have risen steadily over the past five years with a large majority of pupils reaching the higher levels by the end of Year 3. Pupils meet the challenging targets set by the school. Boys and girls do equally well.

Pupils know their own targets but are not clear about what they need to do to improve. More able pupils achieve well because their targets are more challenging. One boy

said, 'I really enjoy my lessons because they are challenging'. Pupils with learning disabilities make good progress as a result of high quality of provision.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of pupils is outstanding. One parent writes, 'This is a very happy school (...) children are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life'. Behaviour is very good and attendance is above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. In such a small school everyone plays their part. Pupils choose playground equipment and are proud of special responsibilities such as showing prospective pupils round the school.

Pupils know about keeping safe and healthy. One girl said, 'We need healthy food to help us grow and give us energy.' A local safety centre provides an excellent chance to participate in real-life scenarios. As part of the village community, pupils perform plays and contribute to the newsletters. Charity fund raising helps pupils to consider the needs of the wider world. Pupils' economic well-being is enhanced by the good progress they make in English and mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and fosters positive attitudes amongst the pupils. They work hard, responding enthusiastically to challenging work. One girl said that she enjoyed completing a character profile because, 'You can learn to describe things better yourself'.

Thorough planning and preparation linked to the good use of resources motivates pupils and makes learning relevant. For example, reception children enthusiastically counted out real coins to the value of 10p before writing price-labels and using the money to purchase the items needed to plant their beans.

Support staff are highly skilled in prompting and encouraging pupils, particularly those with learning disabilities, so that they are able to participate fully in lessons. More able pupils benefit from the challenges provided through grouping by ability and make good progress. Although marking often fosters improvement, pupils are not always clear about their next steps in learning. Most basic skills are taught thoroughly but there is room for improvement in promoting joined handwriting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Physical education (PE) has improved since the last inspection. More activities are timetabled and the provision of a PE specialist has improved pupils' development and skills. Despite the size of the school, the curriculum is appropriately

varied to meet the needs of all pupils and is reviewed regularly to reflect the changes of intake. The local environment is used well, linking subjects such as art, science, history and geography to give relevance to learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well across the whole curriculum. Pupils show that they are capable of doing neat joined handwriting in their handwriting books. However, it is not evident in other work.

Extra curricular activities such as violins, rambling, cycling together with a well-planned programme of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and add enjoyment to learning. Personal, health and social education successfully promotes positive attitudes, helps pupils to understand that they belong to a community and ensures that pupils keep healthy and stay safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. Parents enthuse about a warm, friendly school that instils confidence in their children at every stage of their schooling. The care shown for all pupils is excellent and ensures that everyone has full access to the curriculum. Procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are robust and staff training is fully up to date. Links with outside agencies are most effective in providing additional support particularly for pupils with learning disabilities.

Monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is mostly good. The school regularly assesses pupils' progress and keeps helpful records of progress which it shares with parents. The parents comment that their children are prepared very well for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher shows good leadership through her clear vision for improvement and commitment to promoting high standards. This vision is shared by the staff and as a result all pupils make good progress and standards have risen over the past five years.

A robust programme of monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher ensures that teaching improves consistently. The impact of well-focussed training on developing basic skills has been reflected in an improvement on the quality of pupils' learning. For example, games brought back from a course on creative mathematics have added real enjoyment and helped pupils to improve their recognition of doubles. However, more remains to be done to ensure greater consistency in developing pupils' handwriting and in improving target setting. Good systems for tracking pupils' performance mean that learning is well-tailored to their needs. There is a positive ethos, everyone is valued and equal opportunities are promoted effectively.

Governors make well considered strategic judgements which have significant impact on the school's direction. Their decision to enter into partnership with another first school has addressed the difficulties posed by reorganisation and the retirement of the present headteacher whilst providing new opportunities which may widen the scope of opportunities for both staff and pupils. Financial management is good. Self-evaluation is accurate and well-founded enabling the school to identify where improvements are needed. Strategic plans include relevant priorities and because success criteria are measurable and reviewed regularly they form an incisive tool in school development. This together with the full response to the issues raised by the last inspection indicates that the school has good capacity to move forward.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Children

I should like to thank you all for being so kind, polite and helpful on my recent visit. Your parents and carers are right in thinking that you go to a good school.

You clearly enjoy being at school and you behave very well. You are very friendly towards each other and your teachers. Your teachers care very well for you and help you to be safe and healthy. Other adults who help in lessons are very good at supporting you so that everyone can join in.

There are a couple of things that will make your school even better. I know that you all work hard because lessons are exciting and as a result you are all doing well. However you could improve even more by making sure that your handwriting is joined. I would also like teachers to make sure that you know exactly what you have to do to improve your work. Thank you once again for looking after me so well on my visit.

Mrs Barbara Atcheson

(Additional Inspector)