



Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123802
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281563
Inspection dates 28 November 2005 to 28 November 2005
Reporting inspector Lorna Brackstone RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Willey Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Stoke St Gregory
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Taunton, Somerset TA3 6EG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01823 490437
Number on roll	67	Fax number	01823 490145
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Adrian Stables
Date of previous inspection	27 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Berks

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school which consists of three classes. It admits most children from the local village and all are of White British heritage. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The number of pupils identified by the school as having learning or physical disabilities is below average. Children start school with broadly average skills in all areas of learning. There are more boys than girls in school. The new headteacher has been in post since Easter 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors find the school to be sound overall and provides satisfactory value for money. The school grades itself as good but it does have areas in which improvement is needed.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is particularly well promoted through the strong links with both churches within the village. Pupils behave well and attend school regularly. A new interesting programme of learning has been introduced and this is improving the curriculum for the pupils. Pupils benefit from a good range of after-school activities.

Children enter school with broadly average standards. They make good progress in the reception class and most attain the levels expected by the end of the year. Pupils achieve well in the Reception and in Years 1 to 4 because teaching and learning are good in these classes. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 5 and 6 because the teaching is not challenging enough. This means that those pupils who should reach higher standards do not always do so.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school knows its strengths and is developing an understanding of the areas in which it needs to develop. However, the checks made by the senior management team are not yet systematic enough to rectify weaknesses in teaching and learning.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and the school, under the recently appointed headteacher, is suitably placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Check more thoroughly that all pupils are set challenging targets.
- Ensure that all teachers have high expectations for the pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start reception with standards that are expected for this age group. Children make good progress, especially in their personal development and attain average standards by the time they start Year 1. They are prepared well for their future learning.

Achievement is good in Years 1 to 4 and standards are above average. This is because the teacher expectations are high and work is challenging. Progress in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory. The current group of Year 6 pupils are average attainers and are set to attain average standards by the end of the school year. Individual pupils meet the targets set for them. However, in Years 5 and 6 the higher attaining pupils are not always set challenging enough targets and poor presentation is accepted too readily by their teachers. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties achieve at a similar rate to their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are confident and get on well together in this happy school. Their behaviour is good and they feel that the school is just like a big family. They attend school regularly and are particularly pleased with the good range of after-school clubs on offer. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The two local churches contribute well to the pupils' spiritual development. From an early age, pupils take responsibility willingly, such as deciding to organise a disco to raise money for 'Children in Need'. The trained play leaders from Years 5 and 6 make a good contribution to school life by helping the younger children with games during break times.

Pupils know that they need to keep healthy by eating properly and exercising regularly. They enjoy sports lessons and clubs. They take an active role in the local community through their involvement with Harvest Festival, the Remembrance Day ceremonies and the Christmas Carol Service, which are well attended by the local community. They understand what they can do to improve the environment through activities at a local forest school and by discussion of animal rights. These activities, together with the pupils' well developed social skills and adequate knowledge of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), give them a suitable grounding for the world of work in the future. However, the older pupils could present their work more neatly and this would help them to prepare more thoroughly for their working roles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good practice evident in reception and Years 1 to 4. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and this is a key factor in pupils' personal development.

A particularly strong feature of the teaching is the way in which teachers interact well with the pupils. In the best lessons, positive behaviour management is used effectively. Teaching assistants show good levels of expertise. They are used well to support different groups, including those with learning difficulties. In the best lessons, pupils show real enjoyment because teaching is animated and interesting resources are used. This was evident in a reception and Years 1 and 2 lesson where a senior citizen from the village shared her memories of her own schooldays with the youngsters. The pupils were spellbound as the visitor explained how school was very different long ago.

There are occasional weaknesses in the teaching. Teachers may not make enough demands on the pupils or give them sufficient opportunities to ask questions and make comments. At times, they present new skills too slowly. Although detailed assessment procedures are in place, the information gained is not always used successfully to provide effective teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory. The new headteacher has introduced systematic programmes of work where subjects are linked together, such as history and literacy. This is making the curriculum more interesting and relevant for the pupils and is beginning to have a positive impact on the enjoyment of learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned with the areas of learning for these young children being carefully identified in each activity taught. However, although the school has identified the need for a safe and secure area for the children, current provision does not enable outside access as an integral part of the school day. Nevertheless, the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection when it was considered unsatisfactory.

Extra-curricular activities are good. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the range of activities provided for them, particularly the opportunity to learn French, play chess and join in all the sporting activities. They emphasise that 'younger pupils can join in too'. The school highlights the importance of staying healthy and safe through an appropriate personal, social and health education programme. For example, a survey was undertaken to analyse the contents of lunchboxes and there is a comprehensive programme of sports and physical activities.

Pupils who find learning difficult are fully involved in all areas of the curriculum and provision for them is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support offered to the pupils are satisfactory. A strong feature of support and guidance is the good knowledge the pupils have about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. They know their individual targets well and use them effectively to evaluate their own work. However, some targets set for the more capable pupils are not high enough. Pupils who find learning difficult are appropriately supported but at times their targets are too broad. Consequently, they do not have small enough steps for teachers to accurately measure ongoing progress. Parents are fully involved in their children's learning.

Pupils report that they feel secure and know who to approach if they have a problem. There is a welcoming ethos in the school and adults work hard to provide a safe, secure environment. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and support the family atmosphere well. Child protection procedures are securely in place. The school has good links with outside agencies that support pupils who find learning difficult and makes good use of the advice offered to ensure the needs of these pupils are met.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management of the school has some strengths, and is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has made a good start in sustaining a caring school where pupils are keen to learn and want to come to school. Parents know that their children are happy and safe there.

The school has satisfactory systems for checking on the quality of its work. It has looked at where improvements are needed and has put suitable initiatives in place. This includes a more relevant approach to the curriculum where subjects are linked and are more meaningful for the pupils. However, the checks made by the senior management team on the quality of teaching and learning are not as effective as they could be. For example, the checks made on teaching and learning are not yet systematic enough to identify weaknesses such as ensuring that the needs of the higher attaining pupils are being appropriately met.

Budget management is efficient and the governors have initiated many good improvements to the school to benefit pupils. These include extending the building and improving the accommodation for school administration. Governors support the school. The school takes the views of pupils and parents into consideration through regular surveys and informal meetings.

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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?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School Willey Road Stoke St Gregory Taunton
Somerset TA3 6EG

28 November 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for making us welcome in your school and talking to us. We enjoyed talking to the pupils in Years 5 and 6.

What we liked most about your school:

- You come to school regularly, are interested in learning and behave well.
- You like your teachers and we know that you are able to approach them with a worry or concern.
- The school looks after you well.
- The teachers have planned an interesting programme of work for you and there are a good number of after-school clubs that you enjoy.
- You are pleased with the new part of the school building.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Make sure that the work the older pupils get is not too easy and that they are suitably involved in their learning.
- Check that all the activities you are given help you to achieve as well as you can.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lorna Brackstone

Mrs Lorna Brackstone (Lead Inspector)