



# Stoke Hill Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 113087  
**Local Authority** Devon  
**Inspection number** 289505  
**Inspection dates** 14–15 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Hazel Callaghan

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Stoke Hill
<b>School category</b>	Community		Exeter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		EX4 7DP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 667830
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	340	<b>Fax number</b>	01392 667808
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Vacant Position
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Roy Souter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Stoke Hill is a large junior school. Most of its pupils are of White British heritage, but there is a significant proportion of pupils from other nationalities and minority ethnic groups. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities and more pupils than is usual are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Many of these pupils are in England while their parents attend the local university and, consequently, join and leave the school at different times than are usual. The school was changed from a middle school to a junior school two years ago as part of a local reorganisation of schools. Pupils start at the junior school with a wide range of attainment, which is average overall.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Stoke Hill Junior is a good school that has made many improvements since the previous inspection, especially to the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress. This is because the headteacher and senior staff have a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve and seek to meet the needs of all pupils. This focus has resulted in good levels of care, support and guidance, together with pupils' good personal development and academic achievement. A comment made by one parent is typical of many others received during the inspection: 'I am delighted at the encouragement the school gives to my children enabling them to become confident and enthusiastic learners.' Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds thrive in the school's friendly and harmonious atmosphere. Relationships are very good and pupils take care of each other sensitively. They respond well to opportunities to take responsibility.

Standards in Year 6 have risen over recent years and are above average. This is the result of good teaching and learning. Teachers plan work carefully to meet the varied needs of its different pupils. As a result, all pupils are successfully supported and challenged to do well. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of learning and the world of work. Teachers give pupils a good understanding of how well they are doing and set targets for the next stage of their learning. Targets in English are effective in helping pupils understand how to improve. Targets are not as well developed or used as consistently in mathematics and are therefore having less impact than in English. Learning targets, including those specific to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, are not always monitored sufficiently frequently. This slows what could otherwise be rapid progress towards the next stage in their learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons because the school's good curriculum provides many interesting activities that stimulate good learning.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior staff provide a clear vision and enthusiastic leadership. Systems for evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses are rigorous and all the staff are committed to improvement. Parents are appreciative of the way all staff are approachable and welcoming. Governors work well with the school and provide an important sounding board for new developments. Based on the evidence of good progress already made, for example in raising standards in English, mathematics and science, the school has a good capacity for future improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop clear individual learning targets for mathematics so pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve, and use them consistently through the school.
- Monitor all pupils' learning targets more regularly so that a quicker response is made when pupils are ready for the next stage of learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

All pupils achieve well throughout the school to attain above average standards in Year 6. The school's assessments show pupils to be of broadly average attainment when they start in Year 3 and pupils of all abilities make good progress from their varied starting points. This is a special achievement given the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English also do well because of the good support they receive. The skilful support enables them to quickly learn a broad range of vocabulary and to gain the confidence to express their ideas.

The school's improvements show clearly in the rising standards over the last three years. Test results dipped a little in 2006 particularly in English because of a higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, but most reached the standards expected of them. The school has successfully focused on raising the achievement of more able pupils. Those who have special academic gifts and talents are given many opportunities to extend their skills and broaden their experiences both in school and outside of school at events designed for gifted or talented pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties make particularly good progress in groups withdrawn from the main class lessons.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils clearly enjoy school and make positive comments such as, 'Teachers treat you well and lessons are fun.' Pupils' good attendance reflects their enthusiasm and enjoyment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with particular strengths in pupils' social development and their respect for other cultures. Pupils value one another's differences and this helps to make the school a happy and friendly place where all pupils work and play harmoniously together. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. A few parents expressed some concerns about poor behaviour, but this is not usual and any issues are sorted out quickly.

Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility and do so enthusiastically. Older pupils, acting as 'peer mediators', are successful at helping other children solve problems on the playground. Each class has representatives on the school council and this is clearly a prized position to hold. Council representatives talked eagerly about their achievements, particularly the improvements to the quality and organisation of school lunches. All pupils make a positive contribution, not only to the school but also to the wider community, by raising funds for numerous charities. Pupils know how to keep safe and understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They eat healthy food and take regular exercise.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. The school has worked hard to improve the match of activities to pupils' needs and is usually successful in this. Lessons are well structured with a stimulating variety of tasks that engage and sustain the interest of pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and explanations are clear so pupils understand what they have to do. Teachers make good use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards to demonstrate and explain new ideas. Relationships are very good and teachers make successful use of praise to encourage confident responses from pupils. Teaching assistants, working with pupils in withdrawal groups, successfully promote their learning but assistants' time is not consistently well managed in class, especially at the start of lessons. Teachers' marking celebrates good effort and helps pupils understand how to make their work better. Specific learning targets in English also support pupils' understanding of the next stages in learning, but they are less useful in mathematics.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from a wide range of activities, which have a positive impact on promoting their love of learning. They talked with great interest and enthusiasm about the latest art project and their involvement in the Christmas production, for example. The school has recently adapted the curriculum to a more skill-based approach so that learning is more meaningful and relevant. Although it is too early to see the full impact of this initiative, the curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of various groups of pupils, including the gifted and talented, and those with learning difficulties or in the early stages of learning English. Literacy and computing skills are successfully promoted through many activities. Pupils also speak enthusiastically about their participation in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Their skills and experiences are effectively extended by their extensive use of the outside areas, the many educational visits and visitors to school.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pastoral and academic care is good and much appreciated by parents because pupils feel safe and well supported. They feel confident to talk to staff if they have a problem. Pupils from overseas make a good start because they are made to feel welcome and their home language and culture are celebrated. They also gain confidence in the school's friendly and supportive environment. Staff ensure pupils' health and safety and maintain good links with outside agencies. Recent improvements to the school meals have proved very successful and the healthy and enjoyable menus support pupils' healthy eating habits.

Pupils' work is assessed regularly and weaknesses in learning identified quickly so that additional support is employed. All pupils have targets for the next stages in learning. In English these targets are working well and pupils say they have a good understanding of how to improve. Targets in mathematics are not as successful because they are used inconsistently and they are not specific enough to be helpful. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are set individual targets to support their specific areas of development. All targets are not reviewed sufficiently regularly and this slows teachers' response to pupils' improvement and in setting new challenges.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The ethos of the school is strong and there is a clear focus on raising achievement and on the pastoral care of all pupils. Well established systems for checking the work of the school are used to identify where weaknesses lie and develop strategies for improvement. The priorities for improvement are well founded and based on an accurate evaluation of the school's provision. Governors, staff and parents are consulted effectively about how well the school is moving forward.

The management structure has recently been changed and the final roles and responsibility have yet to be finalised. The staff members who have already taken over their duties are enthusiastic about their new roles and are already having a positive impact on teaching and learning, but there are some aspects of curricular leadership that have yet to be clarified. Governors continue to play an active role in supporting the school. They are evaluative of their own work and successfully challenge the headteacher and senior staff in order to ensure that the school continues to be a successful organisation.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to say thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. We thought you would like to know what we found out about you and the school.

What we found out about your school:

- This is a good school, you are taught well and make good progress.
- You are very happy at school and enjoy your lessons.
- You get on very well with each other and the adults in the school.
- You behave sensibly and are kind to each other.
- You are good at making sensible choices about keeping healthy and safe.
- Teachers make your lessons fun and help you think carefully about how to make your work better.
- You have lots of extra activities and clubs that make learning fun and give you many new skills and experiences.
- You have lots of opportunities to take responsibility and you take them seriously.
- The school is led and managed well by the staff and governors.
- All the adults look after you well.

What we have asked the school to do now:

- Make your targets in mathematics as effective as those in English in helping you to get better at your work.
- We have asked teachers to review your targets more regularly so that when you have achieved them it is quickly spotted so you can move on to new challenges.

Thank you again for helping us find out about your school.