

# Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England First School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123832
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	314732
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lorna Brackstone

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	72
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Hampton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Lowe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Draycott Cheddar BS27 3SD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01934 742052
<b>Fax number</b>	01934 744960

---

<b>Age group</b>	4-9
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 September 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	314732

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the Foundation Stage, current standards, the personal development of the pupils, the quality of academic support and guidance, and the strength of the school's partnership with local schools. Evidence was gathered from visiting lessons and discussions with the headteacher, subject leaders, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a very small school which serves the neighbouring villages and a few families from Cheddar. The school can admit up to 18 children per year group but a significant minority move into age groups other than at the start of the Foundation Stage. Pupils are accommodated in one of three classes, Reception/Year 1, Year 1/2 and Year 3/4. Attainment on entry is variable but is broadly as expected. At the time of the inspection, the new headteacher had been in post for three weeks.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school that provides a high quality education. Nearly all parents are happy with the school. They correctly identify its greatest strength which is that it is 'very much part of the community'. This is illustrated well by a spectacular altar cloth made by the pupils and which forms the focal point of the church. The excellent partnership with other Cheddar Valley schools enables pupils to benefit from a very good range of activities, for example by taking part in a wide range of sporting and musical events. A firm favourite is the annual 'sleep over' in preparation for the smooth transfer to the middle school. Joint training events and shared expertise between the Cheddar Valley schools also contributes well to the quality of provision at this school.

The successful personal development of the pupils is a reflection of the individual care, guidance and support given to each pupil. They feel safe in school because they know there is always someone they can go to if they have a worry or a concern. The good links made with pre-school groups and parents prior to the youngest children starting school ensure that induction is successful. Staff know the pupils very well and high quality relationships are enjoyed. The well-structured provision for moral and social development ensures that pupils know what is expected of them. Older pupils take great pride in looking after younger ones, for example leading them out of church and back to their classroom. Pupils understand the school rules and staff expectations. Consequently, behaviour is good. However, whilst pupils have a secure understanding of their own heritage, provision for understanding cultural diversity is underdeveloped. The pupils do not have an adequate knowledge of faiths and beliefs other than their own, which means that they are not as prepared for their future lives as they could be.

As well as enjoying all the social aspects of school, pupils are very clear that 'learning is fun'. They explain that 'the more you go to school, the more you learn', made evident by their above average standards and their good attendance rates. Pupils achieve well because lessons are planned carefully to match their individual needs. However, too much reliance on prepared worksheets limits the pupils' use of their own independent writing skills. The deployment of high quality teaching assistants ensures that pupils progress well at their own individual levels. Regular and positive verbal feedback to the pupils supports them well in their day-to-day work. However, marking does not provide a sufficient basis for pupils to understand what they can do to improve their learning.

Pupils understand the importance of the daily 'wake and shake' routine. Their participation in the wide range of physical activities organised by the school and the Cheddar Valley partnership enables them to keep fit and healthy. The engaging curriculum is enhanced by interesting trips and outings. The successful 'focus weeks', such as life during the war, support pupils working together across the school. It also provides good opportunities for using local resources and involving parents and governors in their studies. The school is fully aware that better links across the curriculum could enhance the pupils' basic skills further.

The new headteacher has quickly grasped a good understanding of the strengths of the school and is working well with staff and governors to develop those areas requiring improvement. Subject leaders are proactive in the Cheddar Valley partnership and this supports their training needs very well. However, they are only beginning to develop their own monitoring and evaluating systems within the school. Governors are very involved in the life of the school and

use their knowledge well to support and challenge decisions made by senior staff. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection. It has a clear view of its how it is doing. However, the school leaders and managers know that they need to establish a more secure basis on which to judge their effectiveness and set challenging targets for the pupils. Given the commitment of the whole school community, it has a good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage provides the children with a good start to school life. The weekly classroom support provided by the chair of governors and a building project to enhance provision reflect the school's commitment to the youngest children in school. Teaching staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of these young children and provide a secure environment for them to settle into. Induction is successful because it is not rushed and, consequently, children benefit from their part-time start into school.

A good balance of whole-class, group and individual activities ensures that all the children are appropriately involved in their learning. Activities are interesting and fun, for example number rhymes and songs, such as 'Five Little Ducks', support the children when they are first mastering their counting skills. All their efforts are valued and this is evident through their painting displays. Children's progress is carefully assessed and used to help plan future activities. Older pupils make a significant contribution to the good development of the children's personal and social development. This is very much appreciated by parents who feel, as one explained, 'this helps relationships and gives them an understanding of each other'.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve marking so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Develop systems to judge effectiveness and set more challenging targets for pupils and the school.
- Devise a more diverse curriculum to help pupils develop their independent writing skills and enable them to find out about religions and cultures other than their own.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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

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

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

26 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England First School

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. I enjoyed spending the day with you. In particular, I would like to say thank you to those of you who told me all about life at Draycott and Rodney School.

Your school provides you with a good education. By the time you are ready to move on to middle school, you have reached above average standards in your work. You make good progress because you are taught well. The excellent links you enjoy with the other schools in the area enable you to share interesting projects and activities, and this is a particular strength of your school.

You are developing into sensible and mature young people who behave well and show respect towards your own community. You really enjoy playing a full part in school life and I was impressed with the way you behaved so well in church. I enjoyed hearing all about your 'golden time' and am very pleased that you find your learning such fun.

You feel safe because the school looks after you well and because you are given good support and guidance. You have a good understanding about the importance of 'Wake and Shake' and know about eating sensibly.

Your headteacher is determined to try to give you the very best education possible and works well with all the adults who are in charge of the school to ensure that this happens. I have asked them to keep a careful check on how the school is doing.

I have asked your teachers to help you know what you need to do improve your work. I have also asked them to make sure that they plan learning activities that will encourage your writing skills and give you opportunities to learn about different religions and cultures.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Draycott and Rodney First School gets better and better.

With best wishes

Lorna Brackstone Lead Inspector

**Annex B**



26 September 2007

Dear Children

**Inspection of Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England First School**

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. I enjoyed spending the day with you. In particular, I would like to say thank you to those of you who told me all about life at Draycott and Rodney School.

Your school provides you with a good education. By the time you are ready to move on to middle school, you have reached above average standards in your work. You make good progress because you are taught well. The excellent links you enjoy with the other schools in the area enable you to share interesting projects and activities, and this is a particular strength of your school.

You are developing into sensible and mature young people who behave well and show respect towards your own community. You really enjoy playing a full part in school life and I was impressed with the way you behaved so well in church. I enjoyed hearing all about your 'golden time' and am very pleased that you find your learning such fun.

You feel safe because the school looks after you well and because you are given good support and guidance. You have a good understanding about the importance of 'Wake and Shake' and know about eating sensibly.

Your headteacher is determined to try to give you the very best education possible and works well with all the adults who are in charge of the school to ensure that this happens. I have asked them to keep a careful check on how the school is doing.

I have asked your teachers to help you know what you need to do improve your work. I have also asked them to make sure that they plan learning activities that will encourage your writing skills and give you opportunities to learn about different religions and cultures.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Draycott and Rodney First School gets better and better.

With best wishes

Lorna Brackstone  
Lead Inspector