

Stoke Goldington Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110408
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	325145
Inspection date	15 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Paula Protherough

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	17
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Fraser Bull
Headteacher	Mrs Kathryn Crompton
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	25 High Street Stoke Goldington Newport Pagnell MK16 8NP
Telephone number	01908 551253

Age group	4–7
Inspection date	15 June 2009
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Fax number

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. Inspectors investigated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- How well do all pupils achieve in core subjects across the curriculum areas, including information communication technology (ICT), given their starting points?
- Are curriculum opportunities sufficiently interesting and challenging for all pupils from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education?
- How effectively does the school help pupils understand what they are learning and how to improve their work?

Evidence was gathered from school and national data, observations of lessons and playtimes, pupils' work, and discussion with and information obtained from pupils, staff, parents and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors 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

The pupils attending this two-class small village school are predominantly of White British background. No pupils were eligible for free school meals when the inspection took place. The few pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities include some with hearing impairment. Major building works are due to take place over the summer. During this period pupils will be accommodated at a nearby school with which it is federated. Both schools are led by the same headteacher, but retain independent governing bodies.

The school has achieved several awards, including the National Healthy School Award and the Primary Quality Mark.

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, where for many years pupils have reached standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are above the national average by the time they are seven. The small groups of pupils enter the school with a wide range of ability in their development of early mathematics and writing skills, though many are broadly in line with or exceed age-related expectations. By the time they move into Year 1, most are reaching a good level of achievement in all areas of learning. This good progress continues as they move through the school, so they are all well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils with additional learning needs also make good progress, because of the effective support they receive.

The thorough assessment and tracking system for pupils from before their entrance to school through each year group identifies their additional needs. Adults in school then ensure that each pupil receives the close attention and support they need in order to help them make good progress. Parents appreciate this care and the detailed knowledge of their children which the teachers have, and agree that personal development of pupils is excellent. The school website contributes very effectively to good communication and partnership with parents.

The school has been through a successful period of change and improvement, with children's needs at the heart of its work. During the last three years, the school governors have created a 'soft federation' with North Crawley Church of England School, and the schools now share the headteacher, who spends time each week in both of them. This has been a fruitful and beneficial decision, leading to shared enterprises and activities, sparking new learning opportunities for both pupils and staff. The headteacher and her staff and governors have successfully addressed the issues from the last inspection and continue to move forward purposefully. For example, this year the Reception children have moved into their own area, with their own teacher who plans the curriculum and learning environment to match their needs and interests.

The teachers have focused on developing targets with pupils so that they understand what they are learning. This is a planned feature of every lesson, and pupils of all ages can now talk about how to improve their work. Teachers use ICT throughout the day, and pupils routinely and confidently use computers and cameras to enhance their work. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils photographed each other so that they could add pictures of themselves to their letters, which they had written to pen pals at the school they will be moving to while the building work takes place. This attention and preparation to help pupils cope with change is a typical feature of this school where the care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding.

Teaching is good in both classes, and there has been a successful focus on improving handwriting. An increasing number of pupils now achieve neat, joined script by the time they are seven. However, opportunities for pupils to use and develop high-quality writing, or to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects of the curriculum, are not yet firmly established. Specialist teachers enhance the curriculum; for example, music and singing are well developed. There are many enrichment activities, including visiting theatre groups, and pupils greatly enjoy this interesting work.

Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and their behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is excellent. Assemblies make a strong contribution to their spiritual development, and from the Reception class onwards pupils are encouraged to talk about their feelings. There are productive links with the local community and a keen sense of

belonging within the school. However, pupils' knowledge of the wider world, and especially of the diversity of British society, is more limited.

In this small school, the team approach means that all adults play an active part in school improvement. The headteacher is a focused and energetic leader, with a determined group of governors and parents who work hard for the school. The teachers successfully lead and manage the curriculum for each key stage within their classes. They have supported the changes to the Reception provision and the improvements to sharing targets about learning with pupils, both of which have contributed considerably to raising pupils' achievement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception class offers a happy and harmonious environment that encourages purposeful work and play. It is well managed and successfully organised to meet the differing developmental needs of the children. Children's safety is paramount, and the individual attention that they receive is outstanding because the teacher and her assistant know the children's needs very well. Observations and conversations with the children confirm that they feel safe and are confident in the adults they work with. There is a well-planned induction programme for the Reception class, with visits from staff to children's homes and the local pre-school, and children's visits to school.

Good achievement is due to the very thorough assessment of each child, which identifies the next steps in their learning. The teacher provides appropriate, well-planned programmes that meet their needs well. The structured teaching of letters and sounds successfully develops spelling and early writing skills. Practical group activities supported by adults are effective in increasing confidence in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Children show that they are developing their independence, initiative and capacity for collaborative play, and their personal development is excellent. For example, the children proudly talk about what they can do and what they want to learn next. However, opportunities for children to build on this by making independent choices about what to do next are limited.

The indoor environment is very welcoming, and is well organised to stimulate imaginative and constructive play. Despite limited access, the outside area is effective as an outdoor classroom where children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, and increase their confidence through physical challenges. The children appreciate joining the older pupils in the main playground area at play and lunchtimes. Parents are very pleased with the close attention their children receive, and one parent commented that 'it is the very best start possible'. They also appreciate the detailed and regular information that they receive about their child's progress. Last year's teacher assessments show that, by the end of Reception, almost all children had achieved the goals expected of five-year-olds, and that many exceeded them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity of British society.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to use their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects of the curriculum.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stoke Goldington Church of England First School, Newport Pagnell, MK16 8NP

We enjoyed visiting your school recently and you made us feel very welcome. It was good to hear you talking about what you are learning so enthusiastically. You really helped us to find out about your school. We agree with you and your parents that your teachers are good at helping you to learn, so that you are ready to go the junior school able to read, write and understand mathematics very well. You also understand what you are learning and know your targets, which help you to work hard and make good progress.

The adults in school look after you extremely well so that you feel safe and well cared for, which is why you are exceptionally kind and caring towards each other in lessons and at playtimes. Your behaviour is good. You really enjoy your lessons and your work, and especially the extra things that happen in school like special visitors or events. It was good to see you getting excited and looking forward to your move to another school for the rest of the term.

We have asked your headteacher to see if she can make the school even better by:

- finding ways of helping you to find out more about what it is like to live in other parts of Britain
- asking your teachers to give you more chances to write and solve mathematical problems in other lessons.

I hope that you enjoy your visit to the other school, and wish you well in the future.

Yours faithfully

Paula Protherough

Lead Inspector